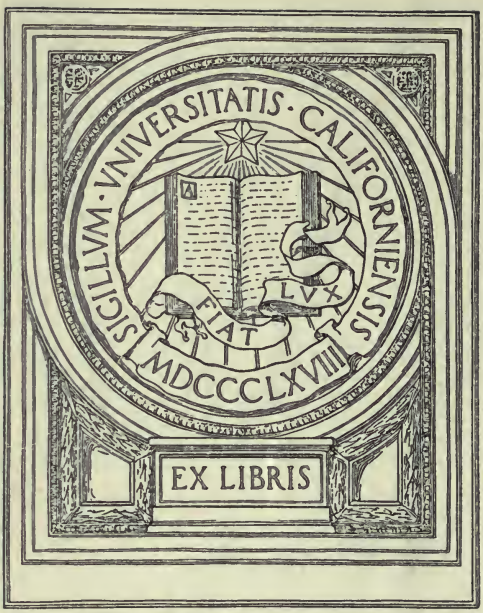
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CHARACTER-SKETCHES.

ARNAUD—MACAULAY—KLOPSTOCK AND HIS META—
MARY SOMERVILLE—MADAME DE STAËL—
VOLTAIRE—CHANNING—WESLEY.

BY

ABEL STEVENS, LL.D.

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LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

CHARACTER-SKETCHES.

ARNAUD, "PASTOR AND COLONEL"—HEROISM.

A NOTABLE old book has been lately reproduced by the Paris press. It was mostly written by Henri Arnaud, "Pastor and Colonel of the Vaudois," a man who, preaching, praying, and fighting for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, would have gladdened the heart of Cromwell, and who deserves to be ranked among the heroes of history. The recent edition of the work is, as nearly as possible, a reproduction in form, typography, etc., of the original edition, issued about a century and three quarters ago. Its full title, almost literally rendered, is "The History of the Glorious Return of the Vaudois into their Valleys; in which it will be seen that a troop of these people, less than a thousand strong, sustained a war against the King of France and the Duke of Savoy; made headway against their army of twenty-two thousand men; opened a passage through Savoy and High Dauphiny; beat many

times the enemy, and at last miraculously re-entered their heritage; maintained themselves therein, arms in hand, and re-established the worship of God, which had been interdicted during three years and a half. The whole compiled from memoirs which have been faithfully made of all that occurred in this war of the Vaudois," etc.

We propose to narrate, though it must be in mere outline, the "Glorious Return;" but some preliminary pages are necessary. An American writer complains of the comparative ignorance of our Churches respecting the Vaudois — the most interesting people, perhaps, in the whole history of Christendom since the apostolic age. American Christians know, in a vague way, that somewhere in the mountains between France and Italy lived and still linger the Waldenses; that they have had a curiously antique history; and that, since the unification of Italy, they have been descending their mountains to propagate pure Christianity over the peninsula, for which task they have peculiar advantages as Italians, with the national language for their vernacular.

Only the best-informed minds among us know how surpassingly marvelous has been their history, and how equally marvelous seems their destiny; that in their valleys, up among the snows and clouds of the Cottian Alps, looking down to the south-eastward upon Italy, and to the north-west-

ward upon France, they maintained their Church, pure in doctrine, morals, and polity, as that of Scotland itself, while all the rest of Europe fell away into paganized Christianity; that, according to their local traditions, their religious history dates from the time of Paul's preaching in Rome; that Paul himself possibly passed through their valleys on his way to Spain; that, at least, some of his Roman converts, or their early successors, fled at the outbreak of the imperial persecutions into these mountains, and founded the faith which remains there in our day; that while, century after century, all the rest of the Christian world was sunk in moral death, and shrouded in the night of the Dark Ages, the pure apostolic light shone undimmed on these mountain heights; that France on the one hand, Italy on the other, prompted by Rome, attempted age after age to break through the Alpine barriers and extinguish the strange heresy, as it was called; that the one terrible St. Bartholomew's Day of France went on here through successive generations, but in vain; that every valley, almost every cliff, has its traditions of martyrdom; that deeds of prowess by the mountaineers, hurling back the hosts of papal invaders, now on France, now on Italy, in at least thirty-three distinct wars, have given them a heroic history never surpassed in the military annals of any other people, dotting their territory with scores of Ther-

mopylæs and Marathons; that, after centuries of praying, watching, and fighting for their faith, they stood, bearing arms, amid the ruins of their homes and their churches, and laid down their weapons only when a solemn pledge from the enemy conceded their rights; that this pledge was immediately violated, nearly all their heroic men imprisoned in thirteen Piedmontese dungeons, their children put in Catholic schools, their women in nunneries; that the Vaudois were at last considered extinguished, their own historians, who had fled to other countries, declaring "the ancient Church of the mountains," the "Israel of the Alps," "obliterated," "irrecoverably lost," as one of them said; that of the fourteen thousand heroic prisoners of Piedmont all died of starvation or disease save three thousand, who, liberated at last, but forbidden ever to re-enter their valleys, made their way to Protestant Switzerland and Germany; that seven or eight hundred of them afterward combined under a vow to redeem their lost cause and country, armed themselves clandestinely, marched, under the command of their pastor, Arnaud, through the most intricate ravines of Switzerland and Savoy, under the shadow of Mont Blanc, along the cliffs of Mont Cenis, through passages in which only mountaineers could make their way, with no commissariat, each man carrying his own ammunition and food, the Catholic towns and villages

rising against them, but quailing before them, as if a terror from God had fallen upon the land; that France on the one hand, Italy on the other, sent armies to arrest their triumphant march, twenty-two thousand men in all; that the band of Vaudois rolled back the enemy in victorious fights, entered their ancient valleys with singing and shouting, fought the Catholic foe from rock to rock through months, supplying themselves with ammunition only by their victories, destroying ten thousand of the enemy in eighteen victorious attacks, winning peace at last, restoring their old homes, schools, and churches, receiving their expatriated wives and children, sheltering even their persecuting sovereign, who had to flee from his enemies below to seek their protection; and that, re-established in their mountains and enfranchised by their government, they are now bearing the Gospel over Italy, and are thus displaying before the eyes of this skeptical age the providential significance of their history.

Such are a few mere allusions to this remarkable history—the most remarkable, we are inclined to think, on record. We delay not to discuss the questions which have excited so much inquiry among European scholars respecting the date of the origin of the Vaudois, a date lost in the obscurity of remote time. We have mentioned their own traditions on the subject, as attested by Arnaud, in his history of the *Glorieuse Rentrée*. We

know that centuries before the Reformation they were a pure Church; that their doctrines, forms of worship, church government, show no traces of ever having been reformed, as they show none of ever having needed reform. We know, also, that as early as the fourth century St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, testifies that the Church corruptions of Italy had not penetrated these mountains, and that in about the year 1125, Catholic writers allude to them as soiled by inveterate heresy. These evidences are sufficient for our present purpose, and we can now approach our main subject.

The *Glorieuse Rentrée* originated in the persecutions which attended the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The Vaudois on the French side of the Cottian Alps were, of course, included in that most impolitic and disastrous measure of Louis XIV. The king was determined to extinguish Protestantism in France. According to the historian Capefigue—himself no friend to Protestantism—no less than two hundred and thirty thousand Protestants fled from their country to escape the persecution; nearly one thousand six hundred of these were preachers, two thousand three hundred were elders of the Churches, fifteen thousand were "gentlemen," the others mostly merchants and artisans—the best in the kingdom. Capefigue's figures were taken from official statistical returns made at the period; the emigration continued years later.

Charles Coquerel says that the revocation "kept France under a perpetual St. Bartholomew's for about sixty years," and that more than a million of the best citizens were either driven abroad, sent to the galleys or to dungeons, or put to death. A single province, that of Languedoc, was officially reported to have sacrificed a hundred thousand by the wheel, the sword, or the gibbet. Three years before the revocation, the Protestant pastors reported to the Government one million eight hundred Protestant households in the kingdom; in about twenty-five years after that act, the king declared that Protestantism was exterminated in France. His bigoted and ferocious policy had struck disastrously the best interests of his country, but it had laid the foundations of the manufacturing and commercial prosperity of the Low Countries of England, and of much of Germany, and had given to the American colonies some of their best families, from New Rochelle to Savannah. The emigration comprised some twenty-one thousand Protestant soldiers and sailors, and six hundred military officers. Most of these entered foreign service, and avenged on France in many a battle the wrongs of their brethren. Thousands helped to save the Protestant throne of England by fighting in Ireland against the attempt of Louis XIV. to restore the apostate Stuarts. They conquered their old persecutors at the battle of the

Boyne, and on other Irish fields. Marshal Schomberg was one of them. Their descendants in Germany, still bearing their ancestral names, were among the best heroes of the last war with France; and Jules Simon, the French statesman, had occasion to show his country that the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had given at least eighty eminent officers of the German staff of the terrible invasion of 1870, by which France was trodden in the dust.

The king's assertion, that his realm was emptied of Protestants, was apparently, though not really, correct. The Protestant houses of worship were either demolished or given to the Catholics. Protestant pastors were hanged or broken on the wheel all over the south. None remained except in concealment, and with the certainty of death if they were discovered. Their people could worship only in caves, or in recesses of forests. Never was there a more studiedly minute or more diabolical edict issued by a government than the Act of Revocation, and its accompanying acts. They reached all classes and all interests of the Protestant population. It was death if they were found worshiping in public; it was the galleys for life if they were heard singing their hymns in their own houses. It was five hundred *livres* fine if they did not send their children to the Catholic priest for baptism. Protestant marriages were illegal, and their chil-

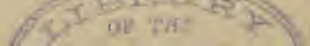
dren illegitimate. All children above five years of age were to be taken by the magistrate from Protestant homes. Protestant midwives were forbidden to assist their Christian sisters in childbirth. Protestant physicians, surgeons, druggists, lawyers, notaries, school-teachers, librarians, booksellers, printers, grocers, were all suppressed—and there were hundreds of thousands of them. All Protestant schools, charitable, public, or private, were closed. Protestants could no longer be in any government employment, even as workingmen on the highways. All Bibles and Protestant books were to be publicly burned. "There were bonfires of them," says a good authority, "in every town." Protestants were not allowed to seek employment as servants, nor Protestant families to hire them, the penalty being the galleys for life. Protestant mechanics were not allowed to work without certificates that they had become Catholics. Even Protestant washerwomen were interdicted the common washing-places on the rivers. "In fact," says Samuel Smiles, our best popular authority on French Protestantism, "there was scarcely a degradation that could be invented, or an insult that could be perpetrated, that was not practiced upon these poor Huguenots who refused to be of the king's religion." Such was the persecution of the infamous Revocation. According to Coquerel's statement, it drove a million of the French out of

their country, and suppressed a thousand pastors, one tenth of whom were either put to death or endured a worse fate in the horrors of the galleys.

When the king supposed his work of extermination done, he was reminded of the humble Vaudois, hidden away in the ravines of the French side of the Cottian Alps. The atrocious work could not be pronounced complete while these remained. The light might again stream down from these heretic heights upon the plains and towns of southern France. They were one in faith, and in almost every other respect, except political allegiance, with the Italian Vaudois of the other side of the mountains. The king, therefore, demanded the co-operation of the Duke of Savoy in the extermination of both. The duke hesitated; blood enough had flowed in these mountains, and but thirty years before fourteen thousand of their devoted population had been massacred, in vain; they appeared invincible; but he had to yield to the superior sovereign, who threatened to do the bloody work himself and to appropriate the territory as his own. Thus began the thirty-third war against these unconquerable mountaineers. The armies of both nations made simultaneous invasions; terrible struggles ensued at three or four different points, but we cannot here detail them. On Easter Monday, 1686, a general attack was made. The pastor, Arnaud, became this day first

known as a hero—the hope of the persecuted people for the future, if not for the present. The Duke of Savoy led one attack; Catinat, with his French, another. Both were hurled back the first day; on the next, Catinat destroyed the little force opposed to him, and massacred men, women, and children. The commanders of the Italian troop sent messengers to the Vaudois at other points, assuring them that their brethren in the Valley of St. Martin had surrendered and received pardon; the positive promise of the duke, assuring them of their pardon, their lives, and liberties, was declared to them, and on this pledge they laid down their arms, surrendering impregnable positions. Immediately the pledge was violated; they were loaded with irons, and fourteen thousand of them, according to Arnaud were incarcerated in the prisons of Piedmont. "Their children," says the historian Mustan, "were carried off and dispersed through Roman Catholic districts; their wives and daughters were violated, massacred, or made captives. As for those who still remained, all whom the enemy could seize became a prey devoted to carnage, spoliation, fire, excess which cannot be told, and outrages which it would not be possible to describe."

The great aim of the Revocation was now supposed to be accomplished. Louis XIV. declared, as we have seen, that there were no more Protestants in his realm. One of his officers in these mountains



wrote that "all the valleys are now depopulated; the people all killed, hanged, or massacred." "Rome," says Smiles, "rang with *Te Deums* in praise of the final dispersion of the Vaudois." The Pope congratulated the Duke of Savoy in a special brief. Roman Catholics were settled in the valleys on the lands of the dispersed Protestants. It was at this time that one of their historians, a refugee in London, wrote, "The world looks upon them no otherwise than as irrecoverably lost and finally destroyed." But the Vaudois Church was inextinguishable; it was still alive in the thirteen dungeons of Piedmont. Of the fourteen thousand prisoners there, many were daily perishing by hunger, thirst, or disease, martyrs for their apparently lost cause; eleven thousand thus perished, according to Arnaud, and the three thousand that at last came forth to wander in foreign lands looked, he says, "more like shadows than men." On reaching Protestant Switzerland they were but "moving skeletons," he adds. The people of Geneva were affected with deepest pity for them, and as they moved along, some to Lausanne, some to Berne, to Basle, to Neufchatel, and into Germany, they were not only fed and sheltered but many of the feebler sufferers were borne in the arms of the good citizens. Some died on the route. The scene reminded the generous Swiss of the hosts who, in the days of their fathers, had filled their highways, fleeing from the horrors of St.

Bartholomew's in France; and many a devout heart sent up the appeal to heaven, "How long, O Lord, how long?" They dare not dream that these "moving skeletons" were soon to rise up like those of the "valley of vision," and bear again to their ancient mountain heights the standard of the faith, and thence march down at last with triumphant hymns to Rome itself.

Assuredly such a purpose, in such circumstances, must have been a superhuman inspiration. In the heart of the heroic Pastor Arnaud, and many others, it was strong at this very moment. The strangers were allotted settlements in several places in Switzerland and Germany, but Arnaud had whispered the bold design to some hundreds, who therefore declined remote invitations, and kept together as much as possible, to be ready for the coming hour. There was no visible hope of it, but these men had as much faith as valor. Could the cause of their Lord Christ suffer any final defeat? Why had they been sustained, fighting successfully through more than twelve hundred years against the attempted invasions of Papal corruption and trained armies? Why was almost every valley, every cave, every cliff, of their country consecrated with martyr blood? Was there no providential design in these things? Could not the Lord God of hosts raise up unknown means of salvation for them? Had not a great man, one Oliver Cromwell,

the greatest sovereign who had ever ruled England, made France and Italy tremble when he threatened to interpose for them? Had he not refused to sign a treaty with France till the alarmed Mazarin consented to join his intervention? Had not a greater man, his secretary, one John Milton, the greatest poet of the nations, written for them, and thrilled Europe with his indignant words:

> "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold," etc.

And was there not a man of power rising, in the Protestant north, William of Orange, the enemy of their enemy, and one who could aid them? But what if no help were apparent? Could God's "almightiness," as John Milton delighted to say, could this fail? Had he not rescued their valleys time and again? Therefore they silently, but bravely, passed the word along their new, scattered settlements: "The valleys can and shall be rescued again. We can march into them under the Captain of our salvation—and, if need be, under Him alone." They found in Geneva the old Vaudois hero, Javenel, who had done many a brave deed in the valleys. He was too aged, and too disabled by wounds, to return, but he planned their campaign and exhorted them to adhere to it. "You will be told," he said, "that all France and Italy will be gathered against you. But were it the

whole world, and only yourselves against all, fear ye the Almighty alone; he is your protection.'

This secret must be sacredly kept, for the Protestant governments that had given them shelter had delicate relations with France and Savoy, which ought not to be compromised. Three faithful men were sent to spy out the land and report on the route. Arnaud went to Holland, consulted William of Orange, and obtained funds for the outfit of arms, and other provisions. Twice they started on their march, and had to abandon it and return—their own Protestant friends, the cantonal authorities, interposing and warning them back. Arnaud, though of undaunted courage, had a sagacious eye, and saw that the hour had not yet come; but he did not allow them to disperse a second time without inspiriting their hope by a sermon at Bex on the text, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

They now waited more than a year, to allay public suspicion, before resuming the attempt. At last, in August, 1689, they secretly assembled in the woods back of Nyon, on the northern shore of Lake Leman, and, with prayer and preaching from Arnaud, hastily organized. Between eight and nine hundred were there. The secret had been well kept, but the neighboring peasants were wondering at the strange gathering, and reports

would immediately reach the municipal authorities. Curiosity to learn what was going on in the forest attracted some fifteen boats to the neighboring shore. Arnaud saw his opportunity. After prayer, at the head of the little army, he ordered the boats to be seized; their owners were compelled to row them across the lake to the Savoy shore. The first passage was successfully made by two o'clock on the night of August 16–17, but the boatmen, fearing for their lives on the Catholic coast, on returning for the remainder escaped up and down the lake. There could be no delay for the waiting two hundred; the transported little force, now but about seven hundred, were in the enemy's country. They were arrayed in three divisions —main column, vanguard, and rear guard—comprising nineteen companies under select captains. They had plenty of officers, but Arnaud was their leader. They were near Yvoire, and they knew that the alarm would be spread by daylight through the country. They must pray and move forward immediately. One of their three pastors went in search of a guide, but was taken prisoner by the authorities and sent to Chambery. They immediately summoned Yvoire to surrender, threatening to burn it in case of refusal; it had to open its gates and give up three of its functionaries as hostages, to be taken with the Vaudois to the next town, and to be sent back only when they could be substituted

by new hostages—a policy which was maintained throughout the campaign.

And now commenced this wondrous march, the *Glorieuse Rentrée*—compared with which Xenophon's Retreat of the Ten Thousand was an insignificant feat. The little army had no commissariat, as we have said, each man carrying his own provision of food and ammunition; they had no animals—none but chamois could go where they had to go; they had no drums—even these would have been an incumbrance; their only music was that of trumpets and psalms. We are reminded of that night when the Hebrews began their march for the Holy Land, "that night of the Lord, to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."

They moved rapidly, but in unbroken order and with unshakable resolution; their determined bearing struck with awe the hostile populations through which they advanced. They knew that they must sometimes use desperate expedients, but they hesitated before none that were necessary; they must seize their food as they passed, but they scrupulously paid for it with the money sent from Holland. They could take no prisoners, save hostages; for how could they feed them or guard them through the Alpine passes? and prisoners might soon be more numerous than themselves. They must dispatch them on the spot, and give no quarter in battle. Their whole route lay through the

territory of the Catholic government which had attempted their extermination; woe to any man who challenged them! Few words, decisive acts, were the only ones possible in the emergency. A desperate Puritanic rigor was their only policy, and it was grimly expressed in all their features and bearing. The Catholic populations could not mistake them, and recoiled, or obsequiously supplied their needs. Even the priests sometimes laid down their stores before them, and bade them go on "in the name of God." From town to town they took the nobles of the castles, the priests, or the leading citizens, as hostages; it was submission or death; the first alternative was always chosen, for there could not be a momentary doubt of the determined earnestness of the Vaudois. They sometimes had forty or more hostages, and had no little trouble with the curés and fat friars, who puffed and halted in their difficult mountain climbings. On the first day of the march four "gentlemen," or Savoyard knights, "on horse-back, well armed and followed by peasants," confronted them, demanded wherefore they advanced in this array, and proudly commanded them to lay down their arms. There was but one reply: "Down from your steeds and march with us, our hostages!" Mounting a hill they saw two hundred armed peasants awaiting them, commanded by a Savoyard nobleman. They dispersed them at a blow, broke to pieces their arms, and took some of them as

guides, "with the menace," says Arnaud, "of being hung to the first tree if they should be found unfaithful." Their commanders wrote to municipalities beyond that the Vaudois were honest, paying for all they took, demanding only a passage. They prayed their fellow-citizens not to sound the tocsin, and not to appear in arms. Accordingly, during this day the people on the way met them with provisions. They halted at Viû, where they were treated with bread and wine, and then resumed their march in the moonlight. At St. Jayre the frightened magistrates had rolled out a hogshead of wine for them into the street, but "some drank not, fearing it was poisoned." They marched on till midnight, when they sent back their first hostages, and, taking a brief sleep on the ground, after prayer, were early again on their way; for it was necessary to hasten; all the country was now in alarm, and the French and Italian troops were in motion to intercept them. They reach the town of Cluse, in the valley of Arve. Mont Blanc towers sublimely above them. The town is walled, and the people hostile; the municipal authorities threaten them, and bar the gates; "but it is necessary," says Arnaud, "to traverse this town." The inhabitants, under arms, line the *fosses*, and the peasants are descending the surrounding mountains with resounding shouts. There is but a prompt word from the Vaudois; they must pass, if they

have to break down the walls, and go by fire and sword. Their remaining hostages, fearing for their own lives, write to the municipality to save them; the gates open, and the little troop marches in triumph through lines of awe-struck citizens under arms on either side of the street. Beyond the town bread and wine are sent to them; the Vaudois send back money in payment. The leading citizens, admiring their chivalry, or glad for their own escape, send a polite invitation to the officers to return and dine with them; but there is no time for such courtesies. They forcibly take new hostages, and march on for Salanches. They defile through a narrow valley, inaccessible mountains on one side, the Arve, swollen by rains and impassable, on the other. "Stones rolled down the steeps could have wiped out an army," writes Arnaud. Here they face a town, a castle, and a force of armed peasants, but the latter are content to let them pass unmolested, though they bear off the nobleman of the chateau and his priests as hostages. They have now twenty of these necessary incumbrances—the first men of the country hitherto.

As they approached Salanches they heard the tocsin ringing; they must cross a bridge to reach the town, and it was defended by armed men. They rushed forward, and the enemy fled. Once across, the Vaudois formed in order of battle; for a troop of six hundred were before them. Terror

fell upon the town and its defenders. Four monks were sent to parley with them, and offer them passage and two hostages if they would release the forty now with them and hasten away. This was all the Vaudois wished; but when the two hostages appeared they were found to be poverty-stricken townsmen, *deux miserables*, says Arnaud. The monks, seeing him indignant, attempted to escape; he seized two of them and "enrolled them in the company of hostages;" and "it is proper to say," he adds, "that they were of great advantage to us afterward, for their remonstrances, prayers, and intercessions with the enemy on our farther passage were so efficacious that we were astonished at the power of these good fathers over their co-religionists." Threatening now to burn the town, they were allowed to pass on and encamp a league beyond, where they slept under a drenching rain, but "thanking God," says Arnaud, "that the storm probably kept the enemy from rallying" in pursuit of them. The next three days were terrible by reason of the weather and the steeps they had to climb. French troops awaited them in the valley of the Isère, and they must evade them if possible. Purchasing ample provision from the peasants, they resolutely moved on, sometimes passing through villages which were deserted by their frightened inhabitants; at others, meeting armed populations which fled before them. The rain drenched them;

they waded through "snow up to their knees;" they scaled Lez Pras and Haute Luce mountains, seven thousand feet above the sea; on the latter they were lost in the clouds, "by which God hid the Vaudois from the eye of their enemies." The "good and holy exhortations of Arnaud animated the courage of the troops," says one of his companions, "under all sorts of miseries in this place, mounting and descending on steps cut in the rock, where twenty persons could have overthrown an army of twenty thousand." They ascended, or rather, says the history, "crawled up the Col du Bonhomme, knee deep in snow, the rain on their backs," and, standing at last on the heights of the Alps, beheld the valley of Isère, in which the French troops, waiting, were prepared for them. Descending to it, they turned into the valley of Tignes, and thus escaped the enemy. Arriving at the base of Mont Iseran, they thanked God and rested a few hours, Arnaud having had no sleep for about a week. Besides all the horrors of the weather and the mountains which they passed through in these days, they encountered in some places hostile peasant forces; they heard the tocsin, "a horrible clatter of all the steeples," says Arnaud; they had to break over barricaded paths guarded by armed mountaineers; they broke through fortifications which had been erected in anticipation of their former advance; these were now deserted, but they

were so situated that a small force could have annihilated the little army—their failure the year before had saved them.

The next day, as they passed over Mont Iseran, word reached them that troops awaited them at the foot of Mont Cenis. "Instead of alarming us," says Arnaud, "this news inflamed our hearts, for, knowing that the strength of our arms depended absolutely on God, for whose glory we fought, we doubted not that he could open our way against all who should attempt to close it." They advanced to Bessans, where an insolent mob defied them; they seized their chatelain, their priest, and six of the people, and, scattering the rest, went onward. The seventh day (Friday, 23d,) they ascended Mont Cenis; some of their scouts seized the baggage mules of the Cardinal Ranuzzi, the papal nuncio in France, who had passed on another route to Rome to assist at the election of a Pope. The spoils were rich, but all were given back to the muleteers, except some papers which exposed the designs of the French king. The loss of these documents defeated, it is reported, the hope of the cardinal for the papacy, and he died of mortification, exclaiming, "*My papers, O my papers!*"

The little army traversed the Grande and the Petite Cenis through appalling sufferings—"surpassing the imagination," says Arnaud. The snow was deep, they lost their way, were enveloped with

clouds. They were overtaken by night; not a few sank down exhausted and were left behind, but rejoined the main body the next day in the Valley of the Gaillon. Again climbing the steeps, they could see the mountain outposts of their native valleys. They were approaching the large and fortified towns. Before them stood Exilles; to their left Susa. The struggle onward had been terrible thus far, but now came the severest tug of war. Twenty-two thousand French and Italian trained troops were before them, and the seven hundred must soon encounter their outposts. But the heroic band advanced, says Arnaud, "with intrepid courage." They attempted to evade the garrison of Exilles through a lateral ravine, but the French troops and peasants fired from the steeps upon them, and rolled down rocks; the way became impassable; they lost several men, were forced to retire, and attempted to turn, in another direction, the heights occupied by the enemy. They soon heard drums, and saw the garrison marching to intercept them. Descending the valley of the Doire, they saw before them, on and beyond a bridge, nearly four times their own number, twenty-five hundred troops, with all the provisions of war. What was now to be done? They must pass through this force or go back. The night was falling; could they dare to rush across the guarded bridge, and plunge into this armed host in the darkness? They

counseled and prayed together. Forward was the final, the only, word. They advanced in the darkness, and encountered a formidable body of French at the bridge, under the command of Colonel de Larrey. They heeded not a shout from the enemy to halt; they received a volley, and three fell; but they rushed on the bridge, sweeping all before them. Arnaud's sharp eye saw, on the other side, the main body preparing to fire, and quickly cried out, "Down!" They bowed, and the volley passed over them. "Forward, the bridge is ours!" cried one of his captains, and the Vaudois leaped to their feet, and pressed onward under the fire of the whole French force. They threw themselves upon it, broke its line, and prostrated it every-where. The day, or rather the night, was gloriously won. The whole two thousand five hundred French were dispersed or killed, for no quarter could be given them.

"Is it possible," cried their commander, a French marquis, "that I have lost both the battle and my honor!" He escaped wounded, and was carried to Briançon. Seven hundred of the enemy lay dead on the earth when the moon, breaking through the night, enabled the victors to survey the field—one for every man of their own force. The latter had lost but fifteen killed and twelve wounded. Valor and impetuosity had made up for their lack of numbers. They had taken the camp of the enemy,

and were thus supplied abundantly with ammunition and other provisions.

And now occurred a memorable scene. The Greeks erected monumental trophies on the fields of their victories; these mountaineers cared for no such commemorations; but there, under the shadow of the everlasting hills, in the moonlight, they threw up a trophy befitting the occasion—a pyramid of all the baggage and arms of the enemy, beyond what they could carry, over barrels of powder; and withdrawing, after touching a match, saw the heavens illuminated and felt the earth tremble under an explosion which sent among the heights reverberations such as the Alps probably never echoed before nor since. It was heard, says the history, even in the city of Briançon, in France. As the echoes rolled along the mountain peaks the trumpets sounded; the victors "threw their hats toward heaven," writes Arnaud, "and made the air resound with the shout, 'Glory be to the God of armies, who hath given us the victory over all our enemies!'"

All but six of their forty hostages escaped in the confusion of this battle. The little troop needed rest, for during three days they had marched "day and night;" but new foes might arrive at any hour; they employed, therefore, the remainder of "this glorious night to climb, by the favor of the moon, the mountain of Sci," and penetrate to the

valley of Pragelas. They would thus be in the Vaudois mountains.

In one week and one day they had made their way through a hostile country, across the most difficult mountain passes, amid rains and snows, and through armed enemies, to the very gates of their own mountains. On the ninth day, Sunday morning, they stood far up on the heights, looking down upon Fenestrelles. Before them lay their ancient homes, their consecrated valleys, now occupied by Papists and desecrated by more than twenty thousand French and Italian troops waiting for their coming. Arnaud ordered the force to be gathered around him, and pointed to the peaks of their beloved mountains, "exhorting them to thank God, who, after they had passed through such miraculous deliverances, permitted them once more to see their old homes." He then offered a prayer "which animated them all anew." Forthwith they marched down into the valley of Pragelas, and encamped before the church. Though it is the Sabbath, there is no mass to-day in all the valley, for the "priests, thinking only of their own safety, had taken to flight." They march on toward the valley of St. Martin, driving before them some of the dragoons of the enemy, and spend the night on the highest settled point of the Col du Pis. The next morning they discover, at the foot of the mountain, Italian troops, "well arrayed." They pause that

Arnaud may pray, which he does "with loud voice and great devotion," and then they move in three columns on the enemy, who take to flight, leaving all their baggage to the Vaudois. The pass was thus opened to the strongest hold in all their mountains, the "famous Balsille," a natural mountain fortification, with but a single approach, with three almost inaccessible terraces, with caverns cut into its rocky sides, the old asylums of the persecuted mountaineers, now convenient barracks and magazines, and with fountains of good water. Hardly had they reached this important refuge when they perceived a company of Italian troops appearing in another part of the valley to hold the pass. The Vaudois rushed upon them, took them, and, after a council of war, "exhorting them to pray to God," slew them all—a half hundred men lacking two. It was a grim, an atrocious policy, but the enemy had necessitated it by establishing it. All the Vaudois who had been taken prisoners had been immediately hanged; no rights of war were allowed them. If they were not disposed to retaliate they nevertheless had no means of guarding their prisoners, and to release them was only to reenforce the enemy.

The twelfth day is entitled in the history the "Day of Consolation," for they advanced to Pralis, and, after burning a new Catholic chapel, took possession of one of their own old churches, and,

divesting it of its Romish paraphernalia, worshiped there again the God of their fathers for the first time since their expulsion. They sung the Seventy-fourth Psalm, an appropriate war-song. Arnaud stood in the door-way, addressing them, within and without, from the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Psalm: "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me. . . . Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion." Arnaud writes, "It was remarkable that this first public worship of the returned Vaudois was in the temple served by Pastor Leidet, who, three years before, was hanged for the faith in the fort of St. Michael." The whole force chanted the psalm, upon which, also, Arnaud preached. The service ended, all prepared to march onward.

The next day, August 29, after prayer, they advanced for the valley of Luzerne, and had to pass over the Col du Julier. They captured on the way the Marquis de Parelle, an important officer of the enemy. All the country was now swarming with hostile troops. They soon met their vanguard, who shouted to them, "Come on, come on, ye barbets of the devil; we have seized all the forts, and are more than thirty thousand." But the Vaudois drove them back, charged on the fortified position of their main force, and in half an hour dispersed

them all, taking their camp, baggage, and ammunition, even to the "rich habits" of their commanders, and losing but one of their own heroes, whose name the historian deems worthy to be recorded: Joshua Mandan, a "valiant man," whom they buried with honors "under a rock." The victors pursued the flying foe as far as the "Passarelles de Julier," and took and slew thirty-one of them. They found, also, the horse of the commander, with his pistols yet on the saddle; the overthrow was complete. The pursuit was continued through the next day, driving the enemy out of Bobi, where the heroes took possession of their ancient homes, and expelled the Catholic intruders who had occupied them for some three years. "Thus," says Smiles, their English historian, "thus, after a lapse of only fourteen days, this little band of heroes had marched from the shores of the Lake of Geneva, by difficult mountain passes, through bands of hostile troops, which they had defeated in two severe fights, and at length reached the very center of the Vaudois valleys, and entered into possession of the promised land."

Here they paused for an impressive solemnity. The next day was Sunday, Sept. 1; a pulpit was extemporized on the rocks, and one of the pastors, Montaux, mounting it, preached from Luke xvi, 16. Arnaud then proclaimed "with a loud voice" an oath, to which all responded, "lifting their hands

to God," and swearing "before the face of the living God and at the damnation of our souls" not to succumb, "even if reduced to three or four men," but to persist in "re-establishing the reign of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, even unto death." They stood on the hill of Silaoud, and the surrounding mountains — the witnesses, through centuries, of the persecutions of their fathers—reverberated their chant of the Seventy-fourth Psalm, "sung to the clash of arms."

Meanwhile they knew that their hardest trials were yet before them. The enemy was pressing in upon them from all sides. It would not do for them to shut themselves up yet in any stronghold; not even in the nearly impregnable Balsille, for they could be starved out. They must march and fight through all the country; either they or the multitudinous enemy must apparently be utterly overthrown before the unparalleled struggle could end. The latter was the only alternative they thought of amid the tremendous odds. The combined armies of France and Italy were not only more than twenty thousand strong, but the Catholic peasants were impressed into their service. The little force must fight back nearly thirty-five times their own number. Their only commissariat must be foragings on the herds and stores of the Catholic usurpers of their old lands. They must fight the enemy with the enemy's own ammunition, won by incessant assaults.

Never did heroes confront worse odds than those now before them. The narrator may well wax dithyrambic over such a story. But how can we go on with it in our restricted limits? We have been gleaning, thus far, only salient facts from a hundred and fifty pages of Arnaud, the pastor-colonel; more than two hundred of his most thrilling pages remain; but we have followed the gallant little army into the very heart of their old mountain homes; we can only summarize the remaining and the bravest part of their campaign.

They had struggled through half a month; they were to struggle on through nearly ten months more. "The war now became," says Smiles, "one of reprisals and mutual devastations, the two parties seeking to deprive each other of shelter and the means of subsistence. Armies concentrated on the Vaudois from all points. They were pressed by the French on the north and west, by the Piedmontese on the south and east, furnished with all the munitions of war." They fight from valley to valley, from cliff to cliff, "now in one place, and perhaps the next day, some twenty miles across the mountains, in another, with almost invariable success. It seems little short of miraculous." They divide their small force to carry on the struggle in separate valleys, sometimes without knowing each other's fate for weeks together. Their clothing has become rags; they often scale heights on

their hands and feet; they are sometimes famishing by lack of provisions. They take many prisoners who have to die; but one of them they discover to be a surgeon; him they spare, providentially for him and themselves; they retain him for their own wounded, and he serves them well, for he knows that instant death would be the consequence of any unfaithfulness. At another time, while Arnaud is praying, the sentinels see the enemy moving to secure a necessary post on the mountain of Vachère; the pastor abridges his prayer and sends a detachment, "who made such diligence and bore themselves so well that they gained the post in the face of the enemy, slaying a hundred of them without losing a man." At one time their leader, Arnaud, is separated from them and seems lost, but "after praying three times with six soldiers who remain with him, he is able to rejoin the band on the mountain of Vendalin." His fellow-pastor, Montaux, is not so fortunate; he is captured and sent to prison in Turin, where he languished till the end of the war.

A sadder trial came upon them; most of the French Vaudois gave up in despair, and retired with Turrel, their chief, down into France. Turrel had been the nominal head of the army, though Arnaud was its real leader, its Leonidas. The retreating band were nearly all captured by the enemy, and killed or sent to the galleys, where they

and their leader perished. Smiles can almost apologize for them. "Flesh and blood," he says, "could not endure such toil and privations much longer. No wonder that the faint-hearted began to despair." But the Italian Vaudois knew no despair. Arnaud prayed and preached on, and their diminished numbers fought on and conquered almost from day to day.

Winter was at hand, and they must provide for it. They cut their way through the enemy, toward their ancient stronghold of the Balsille. They never could have reached it again had it not been for their knowledge of the mountain passes, and their ability to climb; the enemy was waiting for then in all the surrounding valleys, but they scaled the intervening heights by night, and stood in the dawn on the Balsille, above all the hostile hosts.

Here they immediately laid in provisions by foraging on the neighboring farms, and prepared for the winter and for their fiercest struggle. They made stronger every point of their naturally strong position by barricades and intrenchments one above the other. The winter begins early in these mountains, and lasts long; it was now November; armies operate with difficulty at any time in the valleys; it was now next to impossible; but the honor of two great sovereigns was concerned in the desperate struggle; among their troops were regiments who had won distinction on historic fields;

they were led by eminent officers, who were mortified by the superior valor and success of these "devil's barbets;" and, above all, the faith was dishonored. It would not do to give up, and the contest went on more or less amid the incessant horrors of an Alpine winter. "Through six months the Vaudois beat back every force that was sent against them." Arnaud "preached twice," says the history, "every Sunday, and once every Thursday, and prayed with them every morning and evening, very seriously, all kneeling with their faces on the earth." "They had an unshakable resolution to await with firm foot the enemy, and to no more fatigue themselves in wandering from mountain to mountain, as they had done." The repeated assaults of the enemy failing, the latter had to retire to Maneille and Perier for a season, confounded and profoundly chagrined. They burned all the houses and barns around, to deprive the Vaudois of provisions, and cried in departing, "You shall see us again at Easter." The Vaudois, now only four hundred, by the absence of some of their brethren in a distant valley, "commenced to respire again." "They could say with reason," adds Arnaud, "that the eternal God had declared himself for them."

Meanwhile favorable overtures are made to them, but they know too well the treachery of the enemy to accept them. They send out frequent detachments for forage; they slay the enemy at his out-

posts and burn his outer barracks. At last, on April 30, 1690, while Arnaud is preaching, the foe is seen thronging up the valley and on all the neighboring summits. Their position was entirely surrounded. The struggle was recommenced "under the direction of General Catinat in person." "The enemy," says Arnaud, "to the number of twenty-two thousand, (ten thousand French, and twelve thousand Italians,) sent a detachment of five hundred men, selected by Catinat to open the attack. On May 2 they reached the first bastion, which had been covered with prostrate trees. They supposed that they had only to draw away the trees and their way would be clear, but they found them made sure by heavy stones. "Then commenced so grand a fire from the Vaudois that they prostrated the assailants to the earth. It was a thing surprising, the hail-storm of balls which filled the air; the younger Vaudois recharged the arms while the older fired, insomuch that there was a continual fire, abyssing the enemy, 'while a snow-storm played upon them.'"

At last the Vaudois made a sortie, and slew the whole assaulting column except ten or twelve, who escaped without hats or arms to report their defeat to the mortified Catinat. "We must sleep in these barracks to-night," had said, in the morning, their commander, Colonel de Parat; he was now wounded and taken prisoner, and, after being kept some

time in the Balsille, was put to death. The enemy lost a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, and other officers —twenty in all. Not a single Vaudois was killed or wounded on this "bloody day," as Arnaud calls it. "The French retreated in astonishment to Macer; the Piedmontese, who had been spectators of the bravery of the Vaudois, holding their only way of escape, retired to Champ la Salse." Arnaud preached after the victory, the tears flowing from his eyes, and his flock weeping around him.

General Catinat was not willing to risk his honor by risking another defeat; he was hoping for the marshal's baton, and it evidently could never be earned here; he committed the desperate work to the Marquis de Fenguières, who determined on thorough measures, and was saluted beforehand as "the conqueror of the barbets." By May 12 the position of the Vaudois was again surrounded; the neighboring mountains were planted with artillery completely commanding it, and threatening to batter it to fragments; all the outletting valleys were occupied. Five corps of disciplined troops bore down upon it, each man preceded by a pioneer, who bore for him a protection against the fire of the Vaudois.

The day of consummate trial for the little corps had now come, and they could fully appreciate it; but they swerved not; God had been with them, would he now desert them? They could see no

way of escape; but had it not seemed that the angels of heaven had protected them, that the very stars had fought for them in their courses, and could they not still expect miraculous deliverance? A French writer, in contemplating their condition, says, "We know not in all history a more striking illustration of the phrase, 'Nothing is impossible to him that believeth.' Faith transformed them into heroes, and rendered them invincible." Each man knew that defeat now meant death for each. Yet no man spoke of capitulation. The Marquis de Fenguières, having arranged all his positions for an overwhelming attack, again sent overtures to them.

"What is your demand?" asked the Vaudois of the messenger.

"That you surrender at once," was the reply; "if you do so, you shall be accorded passports to a foreign country, and five hundred *louis d'or* each; if you do not you must all perish."

"That shall be as the Lord will," was their answer.

The commander wrote to Arnaud again, offering favorable terms, but declaring that if they were declined every man taken alive should be hanged. Arnaud wrote back: "We are not under your French king; he is not master of this country; we can make no treaty with your messieurs; we are in the heritage that our fathers have possessed in all times, and we shall, by the help of the Lord God

of armies, live and die here, should there remain only ten men of us. If your cannon fire, our rocks will not be frightened, and we know how to return your fire." That very night the Vaudois made a sortie, slaying a number of the enemy. The marquis ordered his guns to be pointed from Mont Guigneverte, his most formidable position, and hung out a white flag, and soon after a red one, to signify that there would be no hope after he began to fire.

Finally, on May 14, the guns began to play destructively upon the Vaudois' position; it had been gallantly held for nearly seven months, but the rocky defenses were now crumbling under powerful artillery. The assailing columns attacked the Vaudois at three points, "pouring upon us," says Arnaud, "an incessant hail-storm, so thick that, after a hundred thousand shot, we had to abandon our lowest terrace." It was no longer tenable, but they ascended to a higher one under protection of a thick mist, which saved them from the fire of a redoubt, which might have swept them to destruction. They fought on till nightfall, but it was now seen that the stronghold would be battered into ruins and overwhelmed; they must escape or be lost. How to escape was the question. They were encompassed by tens of thousands of troops and hostile peasants; all known passes were occupied by the enemy; if seen the next day attempting to

escape their little troop could be instantly annihilated.

"The night fires of the enemy," writes Arnaud, "were blazing all around; the obstacles seemed invincible. In fine, we saw that the hand of God could alone deliver us. Committing ourselves to him, we learned very soon that he who had rescued us from so many dangers had now led us into this extremity only the better to show in what manner he could save us." One of their number was a native of this very region; he reported to them that he knew a solitary, though extremely perilous, path through which he might be able to guide them. The enemy's watch-fires enabled him to see from the Balsille that no other outlet remained for them. "It was along a frightful precipice," says the history. But how were they to get out of the Balsille and reach it under the universal fire which they might expect from the enemy? "Precisely," says Arnaud, "at the moment which seemed fatal with a cruel, an appalling death, a thick mist (such is common in these mountains) fell upon them," and rendered their movements invisible to the enemy. They marched silently out of the Balsille, under their mountain guide, Captain Paulat—"under the protection of heaven," continues Arnaud, "and the guidance of this brave captain." Stealthily they crept along the precipice of the ravine, "on hands and knees, holding to shrubs for momentary

rest and for taking breath; those in front carefully feeling the way with feet and hands to be sure of safe footing." Paulat ordered them to take off their shoes, lest the enemy's outposts should hear them, for they had to pass close by some of these. A slight noise actually brought back the challenge of a sentinel, "Who goes there?" It was a critical moment for them; they maintained breathless silence, and the sentinel, hearing no reply, supposed he had deceived himself, and did not repeat his *qui vive*. They pressed forward, scaling a part of the Guigneverte, and drawing toward Salse—the friendly mist still covering them until ten o'clock in the morning, when they were out of danger. They had encountered an outpost of the enemy on a slope of the Guigneverte, but the alarmed soldiers fled in all haste to their main force; for no one knew what to make of them, all supposing the Vaudois to be hermetically sealed up and doomed in the Balsille. Unutterable was the mortification of the French when, at the rising of the mist, they approached the Balsille to take it, and found that their expected prey had all escaped. "Looking," says Smiles, "across the valley, far off, they saw the fugitives thrown into relief by the snow, amid which they marched like ants, apparently making for the mass of central Alps." The enemy had written to the city of Pignerol that they might look there for the Vaudois as prisoners

to be hanged the next day: the expectant people saw arrive instead only wagons loaded with wounded and dying.

This was the grand crisis—the climax—of the *Glorieuse Rentrèe*. After many fights in most of the valleys, after repeatedly hurling back the combined forces of Italy and France from the Balsille, through long months, they still stood triumphant on their mountain heights.

No man of them could now doubt that the God of armies was leading them, and would lead them, however mysteriously, to a successful issue. And yet they could discern no signs of that issue. Their country was still thronged with armed enemies. They themselves were but a handful—though apparently invincible. What next? was the anxious question. But that belonged to the responsibility of their divine Commander. They must leave it to Him; what they had to do was still to pray, march, and defend themselves. They go on, mounting precipices by steps which they cut in the hard snow. On the summit of Mont Galmon they pause for rest, review their forces, and, sending their sick and wounded under care of the surgeon to a secret shelter, descend hastily into concealment in the woods of Serrelemi to await the night. Another thick mist providentially covering them, they resume their march, and attain a height where they expected to find water with which to boil their

food, for they have fasted long; but none is there. "Heaven," says Arnaud, "seeing our need, compassionately sent us rain." The next day, having early extinguished their fires, that the enemy might not discover them, they advance to Prajet, where they conceal themselves in deserted barns for rest, but without daring to make fires; there, after prayer by Arnaud, a spy is sent out to see whether troops are near; he finds them at Rodaret. Another fog favoring them, they hasten forward; at intervals, when it breaks, they lie extended on the earth till it thickens again, and thus make their way to Fayet by midnight, having "suffered incredible pains, creeping along dangerous precipices, and holding on to bushes to prevent falls into the abysses."

They afterward descended into the village of Rüa, where they found the enemy, with all the inhabitants, intrenched in the church cemetery. Arnaud led an attack upon them, slaying fifty-seven, taking their commander, the Sieur de Vignaux, with three lieutenants prisoners, and burning down the village. The Vaudois supplied themselves here abundantly with cattle, and marched on to the mountain of Angrogone. There, with no apparent end to their perplexities and conflicts, but equally no end to their resolution, astonishing news reached them. The God in whom alone they trusted had confounded all their enemies. The two sovereigns

who had combined to exterminate them, given up to judicial blindness, had quarreled, and had declared war against each other. A strange, an incredible providence it at first seemed, even to these praying heroes, whose faith, like their valor, had hitherto seemed superior to any surprise. Now messages were sent from each hostile party, entreating their alliance and aid. They took sides with their own sovereign, badly as he had treated them. The Italian officers were soon with them, hearty in congratulations and friendship. The remainder of their fighting was side by side with their late Italian foes, against the French, and it was not long before they swept the latter out of all their mountains. Arnaud hastened down into Italy, to the camp of his sovereign, where he was received with honors. All the Vaudois prisoners, both in the mountains and below, were set free and rejoined their brethren to fight the French; "and our joy was redoubled," says the history, "when one of them brought word that, among other kind things said to them by the duke, he assured them that henceforth they might preach their faith everywhere, even in his capital of Turin." "It is the work of God," exclaimed Arnaud; "to him alone be the glory!" "Eight persons out of every ten who hear these surprising and miraculous things will consider them as fables and tales of the old times," he wrote later. It was, indeed, the work

of God; and, if any thing in the history of the human race appears miraculous, this certainly does. But God works by means. Arnaud himself was the one conspicuous agent of this unparalleled military episode; his own character gave character to the whole of it; his faith and courage were invincible; his heroism made every man under him a hero; if he had wavered for a moment, like the French nominal commander of the movement, all would, probably, have been lost. The whole thrilling story is an illustration of his personal character.

A remarkable historic coincidence had occurred during the campaign. William of Orange, the friend of these heroes, had ascended the throne of England, and, while they were confounding with miracles of faith and valor the troops of the royal author of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in these mountain heights, their Huguenot brethren, refugees from France, led by Marshal Schomberg, himself a refugee, were fighting for William in Ireland against the attempt of Louis XIV. to restore the Stuarts and popery in England. On the very day in which Arnaud stood in the camp of his reconciled sovereign, the representative of his delivered people, the battle of the Boyne was fought, (July 1,) and the hopes of the Stuart dynasty were extinguished forever.

On July 5 Arnaud was in the capital, Turin, and wrote to a friend in Switzerland: "His royal high-

ness gives us complete liberty, and desires only the peace of the country. We wish, therefore, all our people immediately to return. Great miracles has God wrought for us in the last ten months. None but He alone knows, or ever can know, the struggles we have had, the horrible combats; but our enemies have failed; when they supposed we were theirs, the great God of armies has always given us the victory. We have not lost thirty men in these battles; our enemies have lost about ten thousand."

Their friends and most of the outer world had known little or nothing of their fate during much of the time, but supposed they must have perished. One of them, who had kept a journal of their movements, had been captured and sent to prison in Turin. His journal was secretly conveyed to Switzerland, and excited such enthusiasm that an army of a thousand Protestants, ambitious to share in their heroic deeds, was soon moving to fight its way to them in the mountains; but it failed, and was not needed.

The victorious mountaineers had sustained at least eighteen distinct attacks. But three hundred and sixty-seven of them held the Balsille during the eight months' siege, "living on little bread and herbs," says Arnaud, "shut in by ten thousand French and twelve thousand Piedmontese," hurling back assault after assault, and at last escap-

ing, "when the enemy had provided executioners and mules loaded with cords in order to hang them."

But the trial was over; the *Glorieuse Rentrée* was accomplished. The "Israel of the Alps" was saved. The Vaudois families returned from Switzerland, Germany, Holland. Their temples and schools were re-opened, and their mountains echoed again their ancient hymns. Their own sovereign, suffering, at first, reverses in his war below, had to fly to them for refuge, and was loyally protected in their valleys. Their Catholic country had reason to be proud of them. In 1848 a petition was signed by Cavour, Balbo, d'Azeglio, and hosts of other Italian patriots, demanding and procuring their complete enfranchisement, for they were among the best citizens and best soldiers of the country. With the emancipation and unification of Italy they commenced what seems to be their great destination and mission, the design of their unparalleled history—the evangelization of the peninsula. They have been marching down from their mountains, planting churches and schools all over the land, from Piedmont to Sicily, from Genoa to Venice. They have chapels, Sunday-schools, week-day schools, charity schools, hospitals, a printing-house, a theological seminary, and periodicals. Palaces have been given them for their theological school and printing operations, and, in some cases, for

chapels. They have districted the whole country into five sections, that of Rome and Naples comprising eleven stations. They are the most legitimate religious reformers of Italy. Their remarkable story affords a lesson to the Church in all the world and for all ages.

II.

MACAULAY—LITERARY LIFE.

TAKE him all in all, Lord Macaulay is one of the best examples of the "literary life" recorded in English history. As critic, "conversationist," historian, orator, and even as poet—for he was characteristically "literary" in all—he may be taken as a type, a very impersonation, of that elect life. His political career was long and active enough to render him historical, and pre-eminent over most of the British statesmen of his day. But his literary life was not incidental to his parliamentary and official life. The latter was but exceptional to the former—a salutary alternative, or rather alterative, as medical men would say. Like Addison, whom, above all English writers save Milton, he most admired, but least imitated in other respects, he was a good example of Coleridge's theory of the literary life—that it should always be associated with some more practical or secular pursuit, which may afford, not only a less precarious subsistence, but also the intellectual invigoration that comes of habitual contact with the world. Addison had hardly begun to write fugitive pieces for the public, under the auspices of

Dryden, when he became a pensioned and party politician. His travels on the Continent, during which he wrote his once famous epistle to Lord Halifax, and began his treatise on medals, his Cato, and the narrative of his tour in Italy, were undertaken at the expense of the Government, as a preparation for its diplomatic service. Through nearly all his life he was in Parliament or in office in either England or Ireland. The first of his immortal Essays were sent from Ireland to Steele, for the "Tattler." He was in the Cabinet, as Secretary of State, when he was compelled to retire by reason of the malady which, not long after, ended his days; and he died at Holland House, the center of the higher social and intellectual world of London. Addison died comparatively young, aged not forty-eight years. He had eleven or twelve years less of life than Macaulay. Had he been permitted to work in the rich maturity of his powers, through those eleven years, he might have achieved as much as Macaulay, and might also have given as crowning a proof of the compatibility of an active public career with the highest order of intellectual culture and of literary productiveness.

Walter Scott, Robert Southey, Samuel Johnson, or any other modern Englishman exclusively devoted to literature, can hardly dispute the palm with Macaulay, notwithstanding his active political life. As a poet he was their equal, not excepting

Scott. The "Lays of Ancient Rome" have passages of as genuine poetry as can be found in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," or in any other of Scott's metrical productions. As a critic he was incomparably their superior. His linguistic attainments, to say nothing of his rare critical acumen, might have enabled him to compete with Johnson, even, as a lexicographer. Few men have been more capable of reproducing the scheme, repeated by Richardson, of Johnson's great dictionary—the exemplification of the use of words by citations from authors. His powers as a historian were far above those of Johnson as a critical biographer, and may well be compared with those of Scott as a historical novelist. In the versatility as well as the accuracy of his knowledge in languages, ancient and modern, in literature of all ages and nearly all nations, in history, in political and even in theological science, he surpasses them. We cannot, indeed, recall another Englishman who so completely represents the literary life; though, of course, scores can be named who have shown more special genius.

It were much to be wished that the example of such men as Bacon, Clarendon, Bolingbroke, Addison, Fox, Burke, Jeffrey, Brougham, Mackintosh, Macaulay, Gladstone, Disraeli, Lubbock, Grote, Bulwer, Derby, Kinglake, and many others in English political life, could be imitated by our own

public men. If some of our statesmen, like Franklin, Jefferson, the younger Adams, Everett, and Sumner, have carried into public life some devotion to letters or philosophy, few, if any of them, have ever yielded any direct results of such culture after they have once entered the political arena. American politics are an engulfing abyss, fathomless and shoreless. Bancroft, Motley, Bryant, Irving, Hawthorne, and a few others, have kept up their literary aims, with a partial devotion to political or official life; but we have yet to produce a single example of high statesmanship allied with high and productive literary culture. Gibbon records that he found his experience in a camp of British militia a help to the composition of his great History, and that his intellect was never more vigorous, nor his style more facile, than "in the winter hurry of society and Parliament." His services as Commissioner of Trade and Plantations, and the exhilarating debates of the House, relieved his mind of the fatigue of study, and healthfully stimulated his faculties to resume, the next day, their wonted task. Grote, the historian of Greece, derived similar advantage from his parliamentary experience. Macaulay's biographer says that "the routine of the Pay-office, and the obligations of the Treasury Bench in the House of Commons, were of benefit to him while he was engaged upon Monmouth's invasion and the Revolution of 1688." His vivid

and virile style; the athletic manner, at once graceful and powerful, with which he attacks every difficulty of his subject; his liberal and wholesome temper; his universal humanity, without a tinge of pharisaism or cant—the whole individuality of the man, in fine, spontaneously manifest on every page, and bearing his reader irresistibly along with him, must be attributed largely to the fact that he was no literary recluse, but a man of affairs, a man of society, a man of the world, in the best sense of the phrase. There is no figure of more manly bearing in the whole lists of English authorship since the day of Raleigh. His every step is strong and forward, down to the last few years, in which, by the splendid success of the early volumes of his History, he became absorbed in the composition of the remainder, retired mostly from public life, declined dinner invitations and society generally, became mortally sick, and began to record in his journals new and startling experiences of low spirits, irresolution in work, and other of those more or less disabling infirmities which, though common enough in the ordinary, exclusive life of literary men, were seldom or never known to him before.

It would be an interesting task to trace, if possible, in his writings and memoirs, the conditions of his vigorous and manifold intellectual life. We attempt this task, not without foreseeing, however,

that the limits and necessarily cursory manner of a brief essay must render it only an attempt.

He built on a good natural basis—the *mens sana in corpore sano*. We need hardly affirm that he possessed that ambiguous power called *genius*. If extraordinary native capacities, or special aptitudes of mind, are meant by the word, he certainly had it to a rare degree; for in historical painting, in biographic portraiture, in dramatic effects, he has seldom been equaled. If Buffon's definition of genius is correct, we may still more decidedly claim it for him. The great naturalist, who ranks among his countrymen as a literary model as well as a scientist, defined it to be a habitude of patience in intellectual work. "I trace a first sketch," he said, in the not ungenial egotism of his old age, "and in doing this I do what a hundred writers in Europe can do. I copy it, and obtain a result which but twenty writers can obtain. I recopy a second and a third time, and achieve at last what Buffon alone can do." Macaulay had, at least, a genius, a capacity for work; and is not this the most normal and most effective genius for our "work-day planet?" Before his health failed he went to his daily task with the zest with which an epicure goes to a banquet. His biographer says that "he would do nothing against the grain;" but with his healthy and versatile nature nothing, save mathematics and metaphysics, was against the grain.

He followed, in this respect, Goethe's theory of education and intellectual life, as taught in Wilhelm Meister—that the training and work of a man should be in the line of his natural aptitudes, his natural proclivities, these being the instincts of his natural capabilities. Like all healthy minds, he loved labor for its own sake as well as for its sure results. "The pleasure of writing pays itself," he said. He lived in books more than in politics, or in society, or in any thing else. It may be doubted whether any man of his day read more, or more indiscriminately. He devoured books, good, bad, and indifferent. His friend, Sydney Smith, said, "Macaulay not only overflows with knowledge; he stands in the slop." Bad or indifferent books were, at least, of negative advantage to him; they warned him against their own faults. In his usual walks through the streets of London, he wended his way among the crowd poring over a volume. His research for his writings was tireless; and the minutest or obscurest data, in obsolete periodicals, pamphlets, street ballads, caricatures, seldom eluded his keen glance. He never recoiled from the lowest drudgery of composition. He reconstructed chapters, recast paragraphs, added or erased sentences, for the slightest improvements. In finishing either his manuscript or his "proof," he was fastidious even to the smallest matter of punctuation. He equaled

Buffon in labor on his style, and his manuscript pages, an example of which may be seen in the British Museum, were a maze of interlineations, erasures, and blotches. He knew, by experience, the value of Johnson's rule, not to pause in the heat of composition, for any verbal matters whatever, but to reserve these for correction when the inspiration of his subject should be exhausted. His usual daily task, after his first rough draft, was to cover six foolscap pages, filling in the outlines; and then to correct and complete them with elaborate care, condensing the six manuscript into two of his printed pages.

Mr. Trevelyan says that "the *secret* of his process lay in this, that to extraordinary fluency and facility he united patient, minute, and persistent diligence. He "never allowed a sentence to pass muster till it was as good as he could make it."

It was in this laborious manner that he required his transcendent style—a style so elegant, and yet so impetuous and swift, that it reminds us of one of its finest examples, in one of the finest passages of his "Lays:"

> "Now, by our sire Quirinus,
> It was a goodly sight
> To see the thirty standards
> Swept down the tide of flight."

—"That is the way of doing business," exclaimed Wilson, of Blackwood's Magazine, though his critical

as well as political antagonist—"a cut-and-thrust style; Scott's style when his blood was up, and the first words came like a vanguard impatient for battle." It was Scott's style only when his blood was up, but it was, more or less, Macaulay's habitual style, for his blood was always up when his subject allowed it to be so. His style was like a full-blooded steed on the race-course, fleet, direct, and of simple but splendid proportions. A society of English workmen sent him a vote of thanks for having written a history of their country which they could understand; and yet what English scholar does not read him with enthusiasm for his style, in spite of its occasional obvious defects? Doubtless what we may call his intellectual temperament had something to do with it, for, to cite Buffon again, "the style is the man," or, as he more pertinently has it, "*de l'homme;*" but it was labor, we repeat, that made it the most vigorous and admirable, perhaps, in our literature. It is a dangerous style for imitators, as he himself said; more so than even Johnson's pompous Latinism. He had early to combat its tendency to rhetorical excess. Some of the finest passages of his essays are more or less marred by that tendency. The gorgeous description of Westminister Hall, at the trial of Hastings, shows it. But in spite of it, his healthful temperament, and his inexorable self-discipline and labor, made him, to both foreign and native readers, the best of

English writers, in respect of his manner of writing.

Genius, then, it may be admitted, he had, whether in the sense of Buffon, or in the more popular sense of that word. But from Macaulay's healthful and well-balanced mind, the usual salient, or eccentric distinctions of genius, so called, were entirely absent. He contemned all attempts at originality of style, whether style of thought or language; and had, therefore, but little respect for Carlyle. He reprobated the "spasmodic and eccentric" character of much of our popular literature. "Every writer," he remarks, "seems to aim at doing something odd—at defying all rules and canons of criticism. The meter must be queer; the diction queer; so great is the taste for oddity, that men who have no recommendation but oddity hold a high place in vulgar estimation." In his own pages our attention is struck by no bizarre trait, but by his sustained and decisive mastery of whatever he attempts. He had nothing in common with the weird genius of Carlyle. It is fortunate, for the language, that the two historians were contemporaries. Carlyle's early style showed his capability for the best English, but he chose to abandon it for an originality or oddity, which has justly been called "word mangling;" his books are verbal torture chambers. His historical writings, in spite of his research and dramatic power, have so much

the character of rhapsodies as to justify the exclamation of Prescott, when he closed "The French Revolution:" "This will never do for history." Carlyle's chief portrait in this book is that of Mirabeau; an able historian of our times (Justin M'Carthy) justly says that "Carlyle's 'Mirabeau' is as truly a creature of romance as the 'Monte Cristo' of Dumas." "The reader dares not trust such history as Frederick the Great." Fortunate it is that, of the two most influential writers of our day, while one has threatened the utter perversion of the normal English style, of both thought and expression, the other has been stanchly loyal to both, and has shown that they can both be as splendid as they have always been vigorous. The Apollo Belvedere is assuredly a more attractive work of art than the writhing Laocoon.

Macaulay was precocious, and his precocity probably gave him some eight or ten years' advantage over most students. Intellectual precocity is usually supposed to imply premature decay; but while some facts favor the supposition, more facts contradict it. Most remarkable men have given more or less promise of their hereafter in childhood. It is seldom that intellectual greatness is not founded in some original or inborn capability. "The child is father to the man" in this, as in other respects; and human nature is more self-revealing in childhood than in any other period of life. Intellectual

precocity, with physical feebleness, may, naturally enough, prematurely break down; but, with a sound body, it may be an enviable vantage ground. It was so with Macaulay. He was small but robust in stature, with strongly knitted limbs, broad rugged features, expressive of health and the mental self-command which comes of health. There was little, if any, Gaelic or Celtic blood in him. If not precisely Anglo-Saxon, he was of as good metal, as both his mental and physical constitution showed, for the Teutonic element was strong in him. His mother was Anglo-Saxon. His father was a Scotchman, descended from the old Norwegian invaders who settled in the Western Isles. Carlyle, a genuine Scotchman, discerned his lineage at a glance. "I noticed," he says, "the homely Norse features that you find every-where in the Western Isles, and I thought to myself, 'Well! any one can see that you are an honest, good sort of fellow, made out of oat-meal.'" One of the feats of his precocious genius was an epic, in his eighth year, on Olaus, the king of Norway, from whom the Scotch clan to which the young writer belonged, received its name. Two cantos remain, extracts from which, given by his biographer, show ability astonishing in a child.

Incredible things are told of his early habits and achievements. From his third year he read incessantly, "lying on the rug, before the fire, with his

open book on the ground, and a piece of bread and butter in his hand." At other times he would "sit in his nankeen frock, perched upon the table, expounding to the parlor-maid out of a book as big as himself." In his walks with the maid or his mother he would tell innumerable stories out of his own head, using already, as the maid said, "quite printed words." It cannot be doubted that his speech often appeared, as Mr. Trevelyan says, "very droll." He was carried to the famous Strawberry Hill of Walpole, and ever afterward bore in his head a catalogue of its "Oxford Collection." While there, a servant waiting upon the company spilled some hot coffee over his legs. After the kind hostess had done what she could for his relief she inquired how he was feeling. "The little fellow looked up in her face and replied, 'Thank you, madam, the agony is abated.'" He wrote hymns which Hannah More, one of the best friends of the family, pronounced "quite extraordinary for such a baby." Of course, his fond mother, a gentle Quakeress, was delighted with his surprising gifts. She wrote, "My dear Tom continues to show marks of uncommon genius. He gets on wonderfully in all branches of his education, and the extent of his reading, and of the knowledge he has derived from it, are truly astonishing in a boy not eight years old. He is, at the same time, as playful as a kitten. He took

into his head to write a 'Compendium of Universal History' about a year ago, and he really contrived to give a tolerably connected view of the leading events from the creation to the present time, filling about a quire of paper. He told me one day that he had been writing a paper which Henry Daly was to translate into Malabar, to persuade the people of Travancore to embrace the Christian religion. On reading it, I found it to contain a very clear idea of the leading facts and doctrines of that religion, with some strong arguments for its adoption." "To a somewhat later period," adds his biographer, "probably belongs a vast pile of blank verse, entitled, 'Fingal, a Poem of XII Books,' two of which are in a complete and connected shape, while the rest of the story is lost amid a labyrinth of many hundred scattered lines, so transcribed as to suggest a conjecture that the boy's demand for foolscap had outrun the paternal generosity."

Another trait, hardly less marvelous than his precocity, was his quickness of apprehension. It gave him rare facility in the acquisition of knowledge. His rapid glance pervaded, not only the subject of the book he was reading, but also its relations to other subjects—its lateral bearings, unnoticed by the author. This power seemed a sort of unique faculty with him. Paradoxical as it may appear, he could learn a book, and learn it, too, "by heart," without apparently reading it. Mr. Trevelyan tries

to explain this fact, but the explanation is hardly intelligible. The quickness of his brain seemed to give quickness to his vision, so that he saw, at a glance, the contents of a printed page. It was like the power of some accountants, who by a mere flash of the eye, on a column of figures, can infallibly estimate their sum. This "extraordinary faculty, of assimilating printed matter, at first sight," remained the same, we are assured, "through life." "To the end he read books faster than other people skimmed them, and skimmed them as fast as any one else could turn the leaves." "He seemed to read through the skin," said one who had often witnessed the operation. There was no sacrifice of accuracy in the process, as Mr. Trevelyan assures us. "Any thing which had once appeared in type, from the highest effort of genius down to the most detestable trash that ever consumed ink and paper manufactured for better things, had, in his eyes, an authority which led him to look upon misquotation as a species of minor sacrilege."

One of the most surprising things in the innumerable criticisms of authors recorded in his essays, his journals, and his letters, is his chronological and verbal minuteness and exactitude. His essay on Miss Aikin's "Addison," and his scathing review of Croker's "Johnson"—a terrible instance of literary "vivisection"—and the still more terrible essay on Barère, are examples. A striking instance

may be found in his brilliant essay on the "Comic Dramatists of the Restoration," where he refutes Wycherley's claim to precocious genius, by disproving the dates given by Wycherley himself, of the composition of some of his dramas. After reasoning on more general grounds against the honesty of these dates, he remarks: "When we look minutely at the pieces themselves, we find in every part of them reason to suspect the accuracy of Wycherley's statements. In the first scene of 'Love in a Wood,' to go no further, we find many passages which he could not have written when he was nineteen. There is an allusion to gentlemen's periwigs, which first came in fashion in 1663; an allusion to guineas, which were first struck in 1663; an allusion to the vests which Charles ordered to be worn at court in 1666; an allusion to the fire of 1666; and several political allusions which must be assigned to times later than the year of the Restoration, to times when the government and the city were opposed to each other, and when the Presbyterian ministers had been driven from the parish churches to the conventicles. But it is needless to dwell on particular expressions; the whole air and spirit of the piece belong to a period subsequent to that mentioned by Wycherley. As to the 'Plain Dealer,' which is said to have been written when he was twenty-five, it contains one scene unquestionably written after 1675, several which are later than

1668, and scarcely a line which can have been composed before the end of 1666."

Almost every one of his essays shows this minute accuracy; his letters and journals abound also in similar examples. He makes particular criticisms and emendations of the original text of his favorite Latin and Greek authors. Besides abundant marginal notes, he pencils, at the end of each drama of the three Greek tragedians, small critical essays, and, judging from the specimens given by Mr. Trevelyan, they show not only good sense and taste, but exact scholarship. He changes his early estimate of Euripides, the representative of the decline of the Attic tragedy, and gives good critical reasons for the change; he places him above Sophocles, the representative of its climax; he exults over the genius of Æschylus, and traces in him the studies of Milton, not without correcting Milton's "sad Electra's poet," by showing that he alluded to the Orestes, not the Electra. Even the dull pages of the Thebaïs of Statius are critically studied, and marked with such observations as "Gray has translated this passage;" "Racine took a hint here;" and "Nobly imitated, and, indeed, far surpassed, by Chaucer." He gives thanks for having been able to finish Silius Italicus—for he finished the very fag-ends of Greek and Latin literature—and remarks that "Pope must have read him before me; in the Temple of Fame and the

Essay on Criticism are some touches plainly suggested by Silius." He looks over Coleridge's "Remains," and exclaims: "What stuff some of his criticisms on style are! Think of his saying that scarcely any English writer before the Revolution used the Saxon genitive, except with a name indicating a living being, as where a personification was intended. About twenty lines of Shakspeare occurred to me in five minutes. In King John: 'Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course.' In Hamlet: 'The law's delay.' In Romeo and Juliet: 'My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne.' In Richard III., strongest of all: 'Why, then, All Souls' Day is my body's doomsday.'"

He dines at Baron Parke's, with Brougham, his malicious enemy, and says: "He was pleasant, but, as usual, excessively absurd, and exposed himself quite ludicrously on one subject. He maintained that it was doubtful whether the tragic poet was Euripĭdes or Euripīdes. It was Euripīdes in his Ainsworth. There is, he said, no authority either way. I answered by quoting a couple of lines from Aristophanes. I could have overwhelmed him with quotations. 'O,' said this great scholar, 'those are iambics. Iambics are very capricious and irregular, not like hexameters.' I kept my countenance, and so did Parke." Macaulay was seldom, probably never, caught napping, and woe to any pretentious critic who was so found in his presence.

Both the swiftness and the accuracy of this strange acquisitive power were shown in his method of learning a language. He says: "My way is always to begin with the Bible, which I can read without a dictionary. After a few days passed in this way, I am master of all the common particles, the common rules of syntax, and a pretty large vocabulary. Then I fall on some good classical work." In a few weeks he was reading the classical works as readily as his favorite English books. He proposed to "make himself a good German scholar" on his passage back from India to England, and did so. After reading Luther's New Testament, he plunged into Schiller's "Thirty Years' War," and was soon familiar with Goethe, Müller, Tieck, Lessing, and most of the classics of the language. During the years which he spent in India, though he did good official work in education and legislation, especially in his "Code," through which he is becoming recognized as the modern legislator of India, he seemed, nevertheless, buried in miscellaneous books. Not even Southey, at Keswick, was more a bookworm; for he could in three hours do more real study than most students could do in fifteen. He went through, critically, nearly the whole course of Greek and Latin authors in serial editions, which Napier, of the Edinburgh Review, had sent out to him, and this besides an incredible amount of French, Italian, Spanish, and English reading. Many of the largest

Greek and Latin classics he read over and over again, and meanwhile sent to Napier some of his finest review articles. On his way out to India he kept himself in his state-room, among his books, with the devotion of an old Benedictine monk in his studious cell. He writes: "Except at meals I hardly exchanged a word with any human being. I never was left so long a time so completely to my own resources, and I am glad to say that I found them quite sufficient to keep me cheerful and employed. During the whole voyage I read with keen and increasing enjoyment. I devoured Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, and English; folios, quartos, octavos, and duodecimos." Again he says: "My power of finding amusement without companions was pretty well tried on my voyage. I read insatiably the Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil, Horace, Cæsar's Commentaries, Bacon's De Augmentis, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, Don Quixote, Gibbon's Rome, Mill's India, all the seventy volumes of Voltaire, Sismondi's History of France, and the seven thick folios of the Biographia Britannica. I found my Greek and Latin in good condition enough."

He proceeds to give striking critical observations on many of these authors, for, rapid as was his reading, it was, nevertheless, by his peculiar faculty of quick apprehension and insight, remarkably thorough.

After being some time in India he writes: "During the last thirteen months I have read Æschylus twice, Sophocles twice, Euripides once, Pindar twice, Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus, Calabêr, Theocritus twice, Herodotus, Thucydides, almost all Xenophon's works, almost all Plato, Aristotle's Politics, and a good deal of his Organon, besides dipping elsewhere in him; the whole of Plutarch's Lives; about half of Lucan, two or three books of Atheneus twice, Plautus twice, Terence twice, Lucrętius twice, Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Lucan, Statius, Silius Italicus, Livy, Velleius Paterculus, Sallust, Cæsar, and, lastly, Cicero; I am now deep in Aristophanes and Lucian."

Mr. Trevelyan says that these works were read critically, as the penciled notes, covering the margins and blank leaves, show. He read as a mental recreation not only the great masters, but, as we have intimated, the minor and least read of Greek and Latin writers—their poorest remnants—annotating them with learned particularity, but dispatching them with his usual speed. At the conclusion of each volume of his own History he read through, as relaxation, Herodotus, who, next to Thucydides, was his model historian. He would read through the Melpomene in a single sitting. He read through the last five books of the Iliad "at a stretch, on a walk," and with hearty appreciation: "I could not," he writes, "tear myself away.

I was forced to turn into a by-path lest the parties of walkers should see me blubbering for imaginary beings, the creations of a ballad-maker who has been dead two thousand seven hundred years. What is the power and glory of Cæsar and Alexander to such power as his!"

He finished Buckle's first ponderous volume in one day—skimming some parts, certainly, but accurately comprehending the whole, and critically estimating it. Elaborate works, in foreign languages, over which most scholars would pore for weeks, he could dispatch in as many days, closing them often with criticisms important and minute enough to elate the pedantry of a plodding German professor.

We may well again lift a warning voice to youthful literary aspirants who would wish to imitate him. Admirable Crichtons are fatal models. Macaulay's example would be ruinous to most students who should attempt to copy it. He was an intellectual anomaly, and had it not been for the rare balance of his mental constitution, he would have been an intellectual monster.

Some of our readers are, doubtless, by this time disposed to suspect that we have been dealing in exaggerations. But we have adhered to the literal truth. Another of his characteristics, which was as remarkable as those already treated—his precocity, his genius, his working power, his quickness of

apprehension and insight — and which, in union with these, was one of the most important conditions of his intellectual growth and literary success, was a marvelous retentive power. An extraordinary memory is not invariably the accompaniment of a colossal intellect. Insight, and the reasoning faculty, are the chief constituents of a great mind; and many a man of genius, like Montaigne, who often forgot the names of his servants, and sometimes even his own, suffered life-long vexation from a memory treacherous in matters of detail. The almost perfect balance of Macaulay's faculties saved him from the tendency of most men of extraordinary memories, to waive, in their mental exigencies, the exercise of the logical faculty, and to fall back, for guidance, on mere precedents. With him, memory was subsidiary to that faculty; a magazine of resources for every kind of intellectual effort.

It would be hardly possible to believe the feats recorded about his memory, were they not indisputably authenticated. "The secret" of his immense acquirements lay "in two invaluable gifts of nature," says Mr. Trevelyan, "an unerring memory, and the capacity of taking in, at a glance, the contents of a printed page." "During the first part of his life, whatever caught his fancy he remembered without going through the process of consciously getting it by heart." When a child, calling with his

father on a neighbor, he found, on the parlor table, Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel, and read it, for the first time, while the elders were conversing. On his return he sat down on his mother's bed and repeated to her canto after canto till her patience gave out. He used to say, in later life, that if, by any vandalism, every copy of Paradise Lost and Pilgrim's Progress, were destroyed, he could reproduce them from his memory. When but thirteen years old, while waiting in a coffee-house for a post-chaise, he picked up a country journal in which were two poems, such as ordinarily occupy the corners of weekly newspapers. "He looked them once through, and never gave them a thought for forty years, at the end of which time he repeated them both without missing, or, as far as he knew, changing a single word." He believed he could rewrite Richardson's "Sir Charles Grandison" from memory. "He was always willing to accept a friendly challenge to a feat of memory. One day, in the Board room of the British Museum, Sir David Dundas saw him hand to Lord Aberdeen a sheet of foolscap covered with writing arranged in three parallel columns down each of the four pages. This document, of which the ink was still wet, proved to be a full list of the Senior Wranglers at Cambridge, with their dates and colleges for the hundred years during which the names of Senior Wranglers had been recorded in the university calendar. On

another occasion Sir David asked: 'Macaulay, do you know your Popes?' 'No,' was the answer; 'I always get wrong among the Innocents.' 'But can you say your Archbishops of Canterbury?' 'Any fool,' said Macaulay, 'could say his Archbishops of Canterbury backwards:' and he went off at score, drawing breath only once, in order to remark on the oddity of there having been both an Archbishop Sancroft and an Archbishop Bancroft,—until Sir David stopped him at Cranmer."

In his fifty-fifth year he writes: "My memory I often try, and find it as good as ever." Two years later he says: "I walked in the portico, and learned by heart the noble fourth act of the Merchant of Venice." There are four hundred lines in the act; he had known one hundred and fifty of them. In two hours he now made himself master of them all, including the prose letter. This was about three years before his death. The only difference in his wonderful memory between his childhood and this period was that in the former "whatsoever he took a fancy to" was involuntarily remembered; now to learn by heart was a voluntary, but never a laborious, act. It was an intellectual recreation. When made a peer he "studied the peerage," and could repeat the entire roll of the House of Lords. When done with the peerage, he turned to the calendars of Cambridge and Oxford, and wrote, "I have now the whole of our university *Fasti* by heart; all,

I mean, that is worth remembering—an idle thing, but I wished to try whether my memory is as strong as it used to be, and I perceive no decay." Such acquisitive and retentive faculties are valuable beyond all estimation for a student. They enable him to work miracles. They relieve him of nearly all the drudgery of scholarship.

Another notable characteristic, the result of these rare powers, was his extraordinary versatility. Our remarks thus far have necessarily anticipated this fact. Its proofs are visible in all his works, and throughout his "Life and Letters." We have mentioned his knowledge of languages. He knew their respective literatures well enough to be a professor of any of them in any university of England, France, Germany, Italy, or Spain. He studied the Portuguese to read Camoëns, but found the Lusiad "enough" for him in that tongue. In a casual conversation at a dinner table, he could discuss any of their important authors with critical minuteness, discriminating not only the best plays, but the best characters, in Moliere and Corneille, Goethe and Schiller, Alfieri and Goldoni, or in the almost endless lists of Calderon and Lope de Vega. Nearly every one of his essays is a good example of his versatility, an ample *résumé* of the best students' knowledge, not only of the character or subject treated, but of its epoch, summarized with a marvelous tact, and colored by an artist's hand. Thack-

eray wrote of him: "Take, at hazard, any three pages of the essay or history, and, glimmering below the stream of the narrative, you, an average reader, see one, two, three, a half score of allusions to other historic facts, characters, literature, poetry, with which you are acquainted. Your neighbor, who has *his* reading and *his* little stock of literature stowed away in his mind, shall detect more points, allusions, happy touches, indicating not only the prodigious memory and vast learning of this master, but the wonderful industry, the honest, humble, previous toil, of this great scholar. He reads twenty books to write a sentence; he travels a hundred miles to make a line of description."

We can hardly be surprised that, with such versatility, and voracity of appetite for books, he became well acquainted with theological as with all other kinds of literature. Few clergymen have excelled him in the knowledge of their own science and of its standard authors. He was familiar with the history and doctrines of the numerous sects of his country. He understood well the great Methodistic movement, a part of which his own father represented in the "Christian Observer." Methodists, naturally enough, have been partial to him for his estimate of their founder, of whom he said, in his article on Southey, that he initiated a most remarkable moral revolution; that he was "a man whose eloquence and logical acuteness

might have made him eminent in literature; whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu; and who, whatever his errors may have been, devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he sincerely considered as the highest good of his species." He has a poor opinion "of some writers of books called Histories of England under the reign of George II., in which the rise of Methodism is not mentioned," and says that in a hundred years "such a breed of authors will be extinct." Mr. Trevelyan says "he was never tired of ranging" in works of "religious speculation, and was widely and profoundly read in ecclesiastical history. . . . His partiality for studies of this nature is proved by the full and elaborate notes with which he has covered the margin of such books as Warburton's 'Julian,' Middleton's 'Free Inquiry,' Middleton's 'Letters to Venn and Waterland,' and all the rest of the corps of polemical treatises which the 'Free Inquiry' produced. . . . It may be safely asserted that in one corner or another of Macaulay's library there is his estimate of every famous or notorious English prelate from the beginning of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century."

We have alluded to his rank as essayist, poet, and historian. No one will dispute his unapproachable pre-eminence as a critical essayist. He was first recognized by the literary world in this char-

acter, and the recognition was immediate and general. From his first article, on Milton, in the Edinburgh Review, written in his twenty-fifth year, he was acknowledged as a new power in the intellectual world. The most exclusive circles of London society opened their doors to welcome him, and from that day till his death he was one of the celebrities of the metropolis. He became the chief dependence of the great Scotch review; it was importunate for his contributions, and he could command his own price for them. Murray declared that it would be worth the copyright of Childe Harold to have Macaulay on the staff of the "Quarterly"—the competitor of the "Edinburgh." Nearly every one of his articles produced a sensation through not only the literary and social, but often through the political, circles of the country. They made Brougham rancorously jealous, eclipsed Sydney Smith, Mackintosh, and even Jeffrey himself. The latter, unlike Brougham, hailed with a sort of rapture the new ascending star, and deeply mourned the departure of Macaulay from England for India; for the veteran editor never expected to see him again. In the collected republication of his essays, Macaulay deprecates criticism on his "Milton," and his other early reviews, especially on their youthful enthusiasm; but the world has demanded no apology for them. They are so replete with knowledge and reason—

their rhetoric itself has, with whatever faults, such superb and genuine qualities—that we would not wish them retouched. We have known grave and cultivated men to burst into tears over his vindication of the blind old Puritan bard, who, abandoned of the world, remained superior to it. He did more for the right appreciation of Milton than any other critic save Addison. In this and other writings he has proved to Englishmen that, while they had in Cromwell the mightiest of their sovereigns, and in his Roundhead army the bravest of their soldiers, they had, also, in his secretary, the sublimest of their poets, and one of the noblest models of British manhood.

Other and even more surprising papers than that on Milton followed, all making an impression never before known in English periodical literature: in his twenty-seventh year that on Macchiavelli, so comprehensive of his epoch, and so decisive of the old problem of his "Prince;" in his twenty-eighth year that on Hallam's "Constitutional History," so thorough on the religious questions of the times of Elizabeth and the Commonwealth, and so appreciative of Cromwell; that on Southey's "Colloquies," so able in its discussions of political economy; that on Croker's Johnson, so remarkable for its critical corrections, and its estimate of Boswell and Johnson; that on Bunyan, in which he vindicates the high rank of the Bedford Tinker among English men of genius; that on Gladstone's

"Church and State," in which he has made out the best argument for religious liberty and for the "voluntary principle," though without propounding—perhaps without intending to propound—the latter; that on Ranke's "Popes," so thoroughly appreciative of the era of the Reformation, and of the comparative policies of Popery and Protestantism; that on Temple, in which the notable "Phalaris" fight between Oxford and Bentley, and Bentley's signal victory, are commemorated; the two articles on Clive and Warren Hastings, so comprehensive of the history and policy of British India, and so brilliant in their rhetoric; the masterly articles on Burleigh, Hampden, and Chatham; those on the Comic Dramatists of the Restoration, on Byron, Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann, Madame D'Arblay's Life and Letters, and Miss Aiken's Life and Writings of Addison, so full of entertaining information, literary gossip and criticism; and the unrivaled essay on Bacon, in which he drew with as much partiality as ability the character of the great philosopher, and made the best statement of his system ever given by any of his critics. The latter is the largest and most elaborate of his essays. It was written in India, and sent to the "Edinburgh" with an apology for its "interminable length." He wrote to Napier, Jeffrey's successor in the editorial chair: "My opinion is formed not at second hand, like those of nine tenths of the

people who talk about Bacon, but after several very attentive perusals of his greatest works, and after a good deal of thought. I never bestowed so much care on any thing I have written. There is not a sentence in the latter half of the article which has not been repeatedly recast. The trouble has been so great a pleasure to me that I have been greatly overpaid."

Napier sent it to Jeffrey for advice on the propriety of dividing it. Jeffrey wrote back: "What mortal could ever dream of cutting out the least particle of this precious work to make it better fit in your review? It would be worse than paring down the Pitt diamond to fit the old setting of a dowager's ring. Since Bacon himself, I do not know that there has been any thing so fine. The first five or six pages are in a lower tone, but still magnificent, and not to be deprived of a word." It was inserted entire, filling a hundred and four pages of the review.

These essays excited so much interest in America that they were first published here in a collected form. Copies of the edition were sent over "wholesale," and Macaulay diffidently consented to prepare a new collected edition for the English market, in order to protect Longman, his publisher, from the enterprising American house. Mr. Trevelyan says: "The world was not slow to welcome, and, having welcomed, was not in a hurry

to shelve, a book so unwillingly and unostentatiously presented to its notice. Upward of a hundred and twenty thousand copies have been sold in the United Kingdom alone, by a single publisher. Considerably over a hundred thousand copies of separate essays have been printed in the series known as the Traveler's Library. More than six thousand copies have, one year with another, been disposed of annually. In the United States, in British India, and on the Continent of Europe, these productions, which their author classed as ephemeral, are so greedily read, and so constantly reproduced, that, taking the world as a whole, there is probably never a moment when they are out of the hands of the compositor."

Macaulay's literary reputation became universal by his essays alone. No other man had ever won equal fame by mere Review articles. They were a monument seen and read of all cultivated men throughout the Anglo-Saxon world. But no one beyond the circle of his immediate friends suspected that he was capable of success in poetry till his Lays of Rome appeared. Of course, he cannot be ranked among the great poets, any more than Addison, Johnson, Southey, or Scott can be so ranked; but had he lived before Johnson he would certainly have had a place in the Lives of the Poets, and a rank above three fourths of Johnson's characters. But if he cannot be placed among

the gods in the *cella* of the temple, he is entitled at least to a prominent position among the demi-gods who stand in its exterior niches. The rhythmical instinct was inborn with him, and was as early, if not as thoroughly, developed as in Pope. Throughout his youth he could throw off rhymed verses, in the sports of his home, impromptu and without end. But there is often a fatal facility in versification, seducing the young aspirant from the deeper things of poetry. It came near spoiling Pope himself. The Horatian lesson of delay and labor can never be disregarded with impunity in this highest department of literary art. Macaulay was the last man to disregard it, and his "Lays," therefore, met with immediate success.

Niebuhr had revived the theory that most of the romantic stories which fill the first three or four books of Livy come from lost ballads of the early Romans. Macaulay was no disciple of Niebuhr, and did not unqualifiedly accept his historical criticisms; but he was fully convinced of the truth of this theory. As a mere literary recreation he attempted, in India, to restore some of these long-lost poems; and the "Lays" sprung from the attempt, full-winged. His friend, Arnold of Rugby, a disciple of Niebuhr, saw some of them in manuscript, after Macaulay's return to England, and he wrote to their author in such terms of eulogy upon them, as to kindle his ambition for a higher

literary fame than he had yet attained; he declined the importunities of Napier for new review articles, and gave himself to the correction and completion of his poems. He bestowed the utmost labor upon them, doing what, perhaps, is the hardest, though the most indispensable, task of the poet—abridging and condensing. He ruthlessly cut out scores of lines—at least thirty out of the battle of Regillus alone. The ancient Roman ballads were, most probably, in the Saturnian meter, pure examples of which have been preserved by the grammarians. It was a proof of the poetic instinct of Macaulay, a proof which could not but cheer him, that his own ballads were, without intention, very like the Saturnian meter. Goethe had succeeded, in his Iphigenia and his Roman elegies, in reproducing the spirit of classic antique poetry; Macaulay, with less poetic genius, reproduced the Latin legends by recreating the Latin ballads—reproduced them in form and substance, as well as in spirit; not merely by his meter and perfect detail of facts and allusions, but by the affinities of his own robust nature with the ancient Roman energy and heroism.

He was anxious about the success of his new venture; but, says his biographer, "the little craft, launched without noise, went bravely down the wind of popular favor." We have already seen Blackwood's opinion of it. Wilson had been his

relentless literary and political antagonist. He had sarcastically described him as, "twenty years ago, like a burnished fly, in pride of May, bouncing through the open window of Knight's Magazine"—a short-lived periodical, to which he had been a contributor. He now hailed the Lays with "a pæan of hearty, unqualified panegyric." He exclaimed: "What! poetry from Macaulay? Ay, and why not? The House hushes itself to hear him, even though Stanley is the cry. If he be not the first of critics, (spare our blushes!) who is? Name the young poet who could have written the Armada. The young poets all want fire; Macaulay is full of fire. The young poets are somewhat weakly; he is strong. The young poets are rather ignorant; his knowledge is great. The young poets mumble books; he devours them. The young poets dally with their subject; he strikes its heart. The young poets are still their own heroes; he sees but the chiefs he celebrates. The young poets weave dreams with shadows transitory as clouds, without substance; he builds realities lasting as rocks. The young poets steal from all and sundry, and deny their theft; he robs in the face of day. Whom? Homer!"

For twenty years editions of the Lays, averaging two thousand copies a year, have been sold, and by the spring of 1875 upward of a hundred thousand had been issued. They were received by

the public not only as an example of his versatility, but as a work of genuine art.

He had a loftier ambition, and is to be immortal chiefly as an historian. He was not unconscious of his powers for his historical task. Many of his essays had been historical studies; more especially, studies in historical biography. Their success could be taken as a presage of the success of his higher undertaking. He had reason, however, for diffidence. The English historians were pre-eminent. They were at the head of the artistic historians of modern literature; and history has its artistic properties not less than the epic or the drama. The Germans excelled in research, but were heavy by the very masses of their *materiale*, and the drudgery, the tameness, of their workmanship. The French were mostly dramatists and rhetoricians in historical writing, with an occasional exception, like Guizot, whose philosophy of history excluded most of its artistic qualities. The English, with Gibbon at their head, who, notwithstanding his defects, stands imperially supreme over all modern historians, had shown a special genius for the art. There were many giants, if not many artists, among them—Gibbon, Clarendon, Hume, Robertson, Lingard, Thirlwall, Grote, Arnold, Milman, Hallam, not to speak of Alison, Russell, Stanhope, and a host of others. It required not only ability, but courage to step into the ranks of such men. Among

good ordinary writers Macaulay could be certain of pre-eminence, but it might be otherwise among the giants. Swift's Gulliver among the Liliputians found that the emperor was taller by about the breadth of his finger-nail than any of his court, a superiority "enough to strike awe into the beholders." But it required other proportions for distinction among the men of Brobdignag. Hume had written English history as a Jacobite, Lingard as a Roman Catholic; Macaulay wrote it as a Whig, believing that the doctrines of British Whig politics are the fundamental ideas of modern civilization and progress. How he succeeded we need not here recount; the whole Anglo-Saxon world has said it. It can hardly be questioned that his History, with whatever faults, has done more to promote Whig principles than any other contemporaneous agency. There was no great reform in English politics in which he was not a representative statesman, down to his last year; his History is, and will be for indefinite time, an oriflamme in front of the onward movement of the Anglo-Saxon race. Hume will always be read for his entertaining manner, the ease and felicity of his style, in spite of his Scottisms; Lingard, whose ability Macaulay acknowledged in his article on Temple, will always be valuable for his research, and for his qualification of religious prejudices in English historical literature; Macaulay will always be read, not only for his brilliant style,

but for his love of liberty and humanity, for his characteristic portraiture, for his dramatic power, and for his thorough mastery of nearly every thing pertaining to his task—especially his exhaustive research, in which he was hardly surpassed by Gibbon himself. Lord Carlisle wrote that "his volumes are full of generous impulse, judicial impartiality, wide research, deep thought, picturesque description, and sustained eloquence. Was history ever better written? Guizot praises Macaulay." Of "his immense research," said Buckle, "few people are competent judges. I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration of his unwearied diligence, of the consummate skill with which he has arranged his materials, and the noble love of liberty which animates his works."

Taken as a whole, Macaulay's work is one of the most genuine examples of historical writing in our literature. He did not much esteem Voltaire's unveracious histories; but Voltaire was the founder of modern history as something more than a mere record of kingcraft, diplomacy and war—a record of national life—of laws, manners, and religions. Macaulay's work is a history of the English people, as well as of their government; and no other writer has so well described them. We have seen how, at the close of each volume, he renewed himself for the next by reading Herodotus, the Father of history, and eminently a story-teller. He read and reread

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Thucydides, the Father of philosophic history, and pronounced him "the greatest historian that ever wrote." He was acquainted with every other historical model in ancient or modern literature. But, while availing himself of these, he faithfully maintained the individuality of his own genius, and stands conspicuously alone in historic literature. His relative rank we need not try to determine; that is usually a fallacious attempt, and a right which belongs to posterity alone. But that his History will be a permanent monument to his memory, no man can doubt.

He knew the importance of little things, of minute data in the illustration of the life of a people—the eccentricities of character, the sayings of great men, the personal peculiarities of statesmen and kings, the characteristic anecdote, the habits of the common people: and, like Cromwell before the painter, insisted that every feature, even to the wart on the face, should be given. To him, George Fox's leathern breeches, and the veriest antics of his honest fanaticism, were essential indications in the genesis of a new form of religion. He disdained no hint which a street ballad could afford him. Having formed his outlines with "consummate skill," as Buckle says—the chronological skeleton of the earlier historians, made up of regality, diplomacy and war—he filled it out, giving it body and living blood, by the common facts of the pop-

ular life. He feared not the critics, for he knew they would fall before the verdict of the aggregate good sense of the people. He knew that critical pretenders—"his puny detractors, unworthy to loosen his shoe-latchet," as Buckle again says — would disparage his facts and call his style irrelevantly fine writing; but to him no facts indicating the real life of a people were unworthy of history; and nothing worthy of history was unworthy of the best literary art. Some one said to Dr. Johnson that he surpassed all his competitors in writing biography. "Sir," replied the veteran author, "I believe that is true; the dogs don't know how to write trifles with dignity."

As he wrote for the people, though with the most conscientious regard for the art, the people gave him a recognition such as no other historian has ever received. "Within three days after the appearance of the book," says Mr. Trevelyan, "its fortune was already secure. It was greeted by an ebullition of national pride and satisfaction." Three competing editions were quickly published in the United States. Our own Harpers wrote him that "no work of any kind has ever so completely taken our whole country by storm." Edward Everett wrote him that "no book has ever had such a sale in the United States, except the Bible, and one or two school-books of universal use." Tauchnitz, in Germany, had sold ten thousand copies, in En-

glish, within six months after the third and fourth volumes appeared. Six rival translators were at work, at one and the same time, turning it into German. There have been Danish, Swedish, Polish, Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, Hungarian, Bohemian, Russian, and even Persian versions. He had said, "I shall not be satisfied unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the table of young ladies." His biographer says that "the annual sale of the History has frequently, since 1857, surpassed the sale of the fashionable novel of the current year." "Within the generation that have come up since the first appearance of the work, upward of a hundred and forty thousand volumes will have been printed and sold within the United Kingdom alone." Twenty-six thousand five hundred copies were sold in ten weeks. "I should not wonder," wrote Macaulay, "if I made twenty thousand pounds ($100,000) clear this year by literature." His publishers actually deposited in the bank for him a hundred thousand dollars, "as part of what would be due him in December" of that year. "What a sum," he exclaimed, "to be gained by one edition of a book!" At another time he speaks of receiving thirty thousand dollars in a single year. Longman could hardly keep pace, sometimes, with the demand for the work. Twenty-five thousand copies of the third volume were

ordered before the day of publication. The stock at the book-binder's was insured for fifty thousand dollars. "The whole weight was fifty-six tons!" "No such edition was ever published of any work of the same bulk."

We cannot spare room enough to speak of him adequately as a statesman and parliamentary orator, for, as we have intimated, he stands pre-eminent above the majority of contemporary British statesmen, and would be historical in this character, apart from his literary fame. It is a proof of the generous instincts of his heart that he early broke away from the prejudices of his Tory education; for, curious as the fact may seem, his father, Zachary Macaulay, the philanthropist, the anti-slavery leader, and the editor of the evangelical "Christian Observer," was inclined to Tory politics. Zachary Macaulay was one of the "good men of Clapham," commemorated in Methodist history, as the Calvinistic Methodists in the Low-Church party of the Establishment, who had arisen under the religious movement conducted by Wesley, Whitefield, and the Countess of Huntingdon. Though leaders in most of the philanthropies of the day, these good men were inclined to Tory politics by their dread of the Jacobinism of the French Revolution, which had considerably infected England. Macaulay, while yet at the university, emancipated himself from their prejudices, but

retained through life their best political ideas. Though he believed, with Buckle, that expediency, or "compromise," must be fundamental in any successful administrative policy, yet he held the boldest theoretical political ethics, and fearlessly avowed his theories and their consequences. The enduring English common sense dominated in all his speculations; and if he believed that a given public evil should be exterminated root and branch, yet he deemed it a violation of not only political sagacity, but of political ethics, to take to-day, by assault, and by the sacrifice of thousands of lives, a fortress which would have to surrender at discretion to-morrow; and that many a good cause famously won might have been better won. In other words, he was a genuine statesman. He came into public life, and remained till his death, an unwavering reformer. He was found at the front in the contest of every great parliamentary question of his times—the Antislavery question, the Reform bill, the India bill, the Franchise bill, the Factory bill, West India Apprenticeship, the Ballot, the Corn Laws, Catholic Emancipation, Jewish Disabilities, Copyright. He was virtually the author of the Copyright Law, which now protects British authors and their families—the "charter of his craft"—after the defeats of Talfourd and Lord Mahon in the same good cause. A speech of remarkable logic and lucidity rallied the House to

his position with enthusiasm. Peel walked across the Hall, and told him that within twenty minutes his views on the question had been entirely altered; and one member after another of the opposition acknowledged a similar change.

Without being precisely an orator, he was one of the most eloquent speakers in Parliament. His first public speech was at a London anti-slavery meeting, in his twenty-fourth year. He was surrounded on the platform by the good men of Clapham, his anxious father among them. The Edinburgh Review spoke of the speech as "a display of eloquence so signal for rare and mature excellence, that the most practiced orator may well admire how it should have come from one who then, for the first time, addressed a public assembly." "It was hailed with a whirlwind of cheers," says his biographer. "That was probably the happiest hour of Zachary Macaulay's life." When Wilberforce rose to speak, he said of the father: "My friend would doubtless willingly bear with all the base falsehoods, all the vile calumnies, all the detestable artifices, which have been aimed against him to render him the victim and martyr of our cause, for the gratification he has this day enjoyed in hearing one so dear to him plead such a cause in such a manner."

After the first of his Parliamentary Reform speeches the Speaker of the House sent for him,

and "told him that in all his prolonged experience he had never seen the House in such an excitement." Denman, who spoke afterward, "said, with universal acceptance, that the orator's words remained tingling in the ears of all who heard them, and would last in their memories as long as they should have memories to employ." Peel remarked that "parts of the speech were as beautiful as any thing I ever heard or read. It reminds one of the old times." "The names of Fox, Burke, and Canning were, during that evening, in every body's mouth," says his biographer. Jeffrey, who heard him later on the same subject, said his speech "was prodigiously applauded, and I think puts him at the head of the great speakers, if not the great debaters, of the House." Mackintosh wrote from the library of the House, "Macaulay and Stanley have made two of the finest speeches ever spoken in Parliament;" he pronounced them "the chiefs of the next, or, rather, of this, generation." Lord Althorp said of one of his speeches, that "it was the best he had ever heard." Graham, Stanley, and Russell made similar remarks, and O'Connell followed him out of the House to "pay him most enthusiastic compliments." The "principal men" on the Whig side "agreed that it was the best ever made since the death of Fox." Of his speech on the India bill one of the speakers said, "I will venture to assert

that it has never been exceeded within these walls."

It is the uniform testimony of those who heard him that he owed nothing to the usual artifices of the orator. He had few gestures and little inflection of the voice. "Vehemence of thought, vehemence of language, vehemence of manner, were his chief characteristics," says the "Daily News." It was "fullness of mind, which broke out in many departments, that constituted him a born orator." He "plunged at once into the heart of the matter, and continued his loud, resounding pace from beginning to end, without pause or halt." "Macaulay," says another witness, "was wonderfully telling in the House. Every sentence was devoured by the listeners."

Cicero says the orator should be a good man, for the popular conviction of his integrity gives sevenfold force to all he says. Macaulay's unquestionable honesty made him mighty. He resigned office in the ministry in order to make, honorably, a speech against a bill of the Government—a bill of his own party; but the cabinet had the good sense not to accept his resignation. He lost his election in Edinburgh rather than yield to a Scotch religious prejudice; but his constituents became, in time, ashamed of their conduct, re-elected him with honors, and proudly kept him till the infirmities of his last years compelled him to retire,

when they took leave of him with demonstrations of affection and admiration. Sydney Smith said that he was absolutely incorruptible; that no money, no title, ribbon, or coronet, could change him. His prejudices were strong and sometimes extreme, but they were honest; they shared the strength and sincerity which characterized his intellect and his virtues.

Pre-eminent in so many respects, he was almost equally so as a converser. Never in the saloons of Paris, from the days of Rambouillet down to ours, nor in the circles of London, not excepting Johnson's Club, with the "great moralist," and Burke, Reynolds, and Goldsmith around its table, had conversational talent been more a social power than during the life of Macaulay. Coleridge, Charles Lamb, Sydney Smith, Rogers, Mackintosh, Carlyle, Brougham, Milman, Dickens, Thackeray, and many others, were his rivals, but hardly his equals, much less his superiors, in the table-talk of the metropolis. If Coleridge, with his interminable monologues, was their oracle in philosophy, if Sydney Smith and Charles Lamb were their oracles in humor, Macaulay was their supreme oracle in criticism and in universal knowledge.

Crabbe Robinson, whose entertaining autobiography gives one of the best views of the best London society of this period, alludes to Macaulay's earliest appearance in it, about his twenty-

sixth year, and says: "I had a most interesting companion at the table in young Macaulay; one of the most promising of the rising generation I have seen for a long time: very eloquent and cheerful, overflowing with words, and not poor in thought, he seems a correct as well as a full man. He showed a minute knowledge of subjects not introduced by himself. He was a good example of Bacon's well-known remark in all its three particulars: 'Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.'" Lord Carlisle's Journal gives many fine pictures of Macaulay at the London symposia. "Never," he says on one occasion, "were such torrents of good talk as burst and sputtered over from Macaulay and Hallam." At a breakfast with Macaulay, he says: "The conversation ranged the world—art, ancient and modern; the Greek tragedians; character of the orators. It is a refreshing break in commonplace life. I stayed till past twelve."

At another time, "Macaulay rather paradoxical, as he is apt to be. The greatest wonder about him is the quantity of trash he remembers. He went off at a score with Lord Thurlow's poetry." Again, "Macaulay's flow never ceased once during the four hours, but it is never overbearing." Again, "On being challenged, he repeated the names of the owners of the several carriages that went to Clarissa's funeral." Though never overbearing, in tem-

per, at least, yet in the affluence of his thoughts he was disposed, like Coleridge, to usurp the conversation. Sydney Smith, whom he could usually overwhelm, once remarked to him with mock pathos, "Macaulay, what a loss you will suffer when I die, having never heard me converse." Lord Carlisle describes a scene in which Macaulay, Hallam, and Whewell, discussing together a grave ethical question, got so high, "without, however, the slightest loss of temper," that when his lordship left the table "not one sentence could any of them finish."

"His appearance and bearing," says Mr. Trevelyan, "in conversation were singularly effective. Sitting bolt upright, his hands resting on the arms of his chair or folded over the handle of his walking-stick, knitting his great eyebrows if the subject was one which had to be thought out as he went along, or brightening from the forehead downward when a burst of humor was coming, his honest glance and massive features suited well with the manly, sagacious sentiments which he set forth in his pleasant, sonorous voice, and in his racy and admirably intelligible language."

But, brilliant as he was in society, his absorption in literature made his library far more attractive to him than any dinner party. He at last had a thorough distaste for the chance society of a London drawing-room, and almost entirely abandoned it,

as he "also relinquished that House of Commons, which the first sentences of his speeches hushed into silence, and the first five minutes filled to overflowing." He consecrated his last years to his History. He became a devotee of the "literary life," of which, as we said in the outset, he is one of the most admirable examples in English literary history, and in which we have endeavored chiefly to consider him. Finally, giving up politics, as well as society, he lived almost exclusively in his library and the circle of his immediate kindred. He found and declared his genuine happiness in this literary consecration, for every virtue, as well as every muse, dwelt with him there. Gibbon said that he would not exchange his enjoyment of books for the riches of the Indies; Montesquieu declared there was no trouble, no chagrin, he could not get rid of in his library; Lessing said that if the alternatives were offered him, by the Creator, to acquire knowledge immediately by intuition, or in his usual way, by laborious study, he would choose the latter; for study is itself a felicity.

"Macaulay's way of life," says Mr. Trevelyan, "would have seemed solitary to others, but it was not to him. While he had a volume in his hands he never could be without a quaint companion to laugh with him or to laugh at; a counselor to suggest wise and lofty thoughts, and a friend with whom to share them. When he opened for the tenth or

fifteenth time some history, or memoir, or romance, every incident and almost every sentence of which he had by heart, his feeling was precisely that which we experience on meeting an old comrade whom we like all the better because we know the exact lines on which his talk will run." He wrote from India: "Books are becoming every thing to me. If I had this moment my choice of life I would bury myself in one of those immense libraries that we saw together at the universities, and never pass a waking hour without a book before me."

He found, as he said, that a "book is the best of anodynes" for hours of suffering. A bibliomaniac is never a pessimist. His strong affections rendered the death of his youngest sister almost a fatal blow to him. When the sad news reached him in India, he wrote: "That I have not sunk under this blow I owe chiefly to literature. What a blessing it is to love books as I love them; to be able to converse with the dead, and live among the unreal." He wrote still later: "Literature has saved my life and my reason. Even now I dare not, in the intervals of business, remain alone for a minute without a book in my hand. I am more than half resolved to abandon politics and give myself wholly to letters."

No man has left us more delightful experiences of the pleasures of literature. In his library he

could summon around him the great bards, to chant him their immortal lays; the great historians, to recite their narratives; the great orators, to exhilarate him with their eloquence; the great novelists, to entertain him with their stories; the great travelers, with whom he could traverse the world without leaving his fireside, and witness the wonders, without sharing the perils, of their adventures. A good library was to him the best of material provisions for happiness, and a good author the best of companions. In his essay on Bacon he eloquently says: "These friendships are exposed to no danger from occurrences by which other attachments are weakened or dissolved. Time glides on, fortune is inconstant, tempers are soured, bonds which seemed indissoluble are daily sundered by interest, by emulation, or by caprice; but no such cause can affect the silent converse which we hold with the highest of human intellects. The placid intercourse is disturbed by no jealousies or resentments. These are the old friends who are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity. With the dead there is no rivalry; in the dead there is no change. Plato is never sullen, Cervantes is never petulant, Demosthenes never comes unseasonably, Dante never stays too long; no difference of political opinions can ever alienate Cicero, no heresy can excite the horror of Bossuet."

It was befitting that such a man should die in his study. "He was found dead," says his biographer, "in his library, seated in his easy-chair, and dressed as usual, with his book on the table still open." He died in his sixtieth year, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, where, amid the monuments of Addison, Johnson, Gray, and Goldsmith, his tomb bears the inscription, "His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore."

Such a life can be recorded only in emphatic terms, for its facts are emphatic; and, though his biographer belonged to his party and to his kindred, the reader is not disposed to accuse him of undue partiality, and demands no qualification of the eulogistic tone of his narrative. While living, and still more after his death, Macaulay was criticised, particularly by Tory critics, as declamatory, exaggerated, and even superficial. He never publicly replied to such derogations; he could leave them to the good sense of his readers; their occasional repetition in our day cannot effect his reputation. He says in his Journal: "Like other writers, I swallow the praise and think the blame absurd. But, in truth, I do think that the fault-finding is generally unreasonable, though the book is, no doubt, faulty enough." "I often think that an extensive knowledge of literary history is of inestimable value to a literary man! I mean as respects

the regulation of his mind, the moderating of his hopes and of his fears, and the strengthening of his fortitude. I have had detractors enough to annoy me, if I had not known that no writer, equally successful with myself, has suffered so little from detraction; and that many writers, more deserving and less successful than myself, have excited envy which has appeared in the form of the most horrible calumnies. The proper answer to abuse is contempt, to which I am by nature sufficiently prone; and contempt does not show itself by contemptuous expressions."

III.

KLOPSTOCK AND HIS META—LOVE AND LITERATURE.

NO name in modern literature is circled with a purer halo than the awkward one of Klopstock, the German poet. He combined something of the genius of Milton, with the simplicity of childhood, the affectionateness of woman, and the piety of a saint. Like most Germans of genius, his great original powers did not dispose him to claim exemption from the hardest labors of the student. He was profoundly learned, even in the dryest of sciences—philology; and from boyhood till a veteran of eighty years, never relaxed his studious habits. If, like most literary works of his time, his writings have given way to more modern productions, he is, nevertheless, acknowledged to be the founder of the modern German poetry, which culminated in Göethe and Schiller. "It was the Messiah of Klopstock," says Madame de Staël, in her "Germany," "that marked the epoch of German poetry." There is hardly a dissent among German critics, respecting this fact.

He was born at Quedlinburg, July 2, 1724. His childhood was spent under the instructions of pri-

vate tutors and the gymnasium. In his sixteenth year he entered college, and soon mastered the classic authors with a success described as "perfect." Virgil, especially, became his favorite, and the model of his youthful attempts in poetical composition.

It was at this early period that he conceived, with the boldness of true genius, the high design of furnishing his language with a native epic. Germany had not hitherto produced such a work, if we except the legendary Nibelungenlied of the thirteenth century. His soul glowed with the hope of being forever acknowledged as her first epic bard. His enthusiasm for Homer and Virgil, his daily companions, kindled with increased ardor this noble ambition. If any thing further was necessary to determine his purpose, it was the reading of a Frenchman's attack on the German intellect, charging it with incapacity for poetry—a charge quite as applicable to the Gallic mind as to any in Europe. Voltaire, like Klopstock, was ambitious to give his country a native epic; and produced the abortive *Henriade*.

There is a sort of mixed, unconscious self-confidence and simplicity in true genius, that often seems more akin to weakness than to strength. Genius sees not usually the magnitude of the difficulty, but it perceives the glory of its purposes. Without calculating means, which appear

like matters of instinct or intuition to it, it strikes forward at the result, and from its very courage derives a strength without which it must have failed. The design of Klopstock would have hardly been conceived at a more considerate age. But now in his boyhood it glowed, a Promethean spark within him, until it inflamed all his faculties. He immediately set himself to search for a fitting theme; and after choosing and rejecting many, fixed upon Henry the First, the founder of the freedom of his native city, and conqueror of the Huns.

A profound element was at work in the developing mind of the poet—one stronger even than his genius, and which soon imbued his whole nature. It was religion. The characteristic earnestness of the German mind—the basis at once of its doubt and its piety, according to individual predispositions—was a marked trait of the whole life of Klopstock; and while the ambition of his boyhood was projecting a brilliant fame, the idea of a higher immortality dawned upon his mind—the soul, God, death, eternity, became overpowering conceptions, in comparison with which all motives of human ambition, all principles of æsthetic art or earthly knowledge, became lighter than vanity. Henceforth he was a consecrated man. He still felt the afflatus of genius upon his spirit, and was more determined than ever to signalize his country and his day by a great poem, which, as the blind old Milton hoped

of his own, "the world would not willingly let die;" but God, not the hero of barbarous victories, was to be its theme. In an oration which he delivered about this time, before his college, he expresses, after an able dissertation on the condition of German poetry, his views of the character requisite to the writer of an epic poem, and exclaims: "If among our present poets there may not be one who is destined to distinguish his native country with this honor, hasten to arise, O glorious day, which shall bring such a being to light! May the sun which shall first behold him, approach! May virtue, and wisdom, with the celestial muse, nurse him with the tenderest care! May the whole field of nature be displayed before him, and the whole magnificence of our adorable religion! To him may even the range of future ages be no longer wrapped in impenetrable darkness; and by these instructors may he be rendered worthy of immortal fame, and of the approbation of God himself, whom, above all, let him celebrate." These were noble sentiments for a young man but twenty-one years of age, a time of life when students in Germany pride themselves most on their achievements over the wassail bowl, or on the audacity of their skepticism.

The change in the project of his poem was not a little owing to Milton, whom he read in Bodmer's translation. In a letter which he afterward addressed to Bodmer, he gives us the following glimpse

at the early workings of his mind on the subject: "When yet a boy, reading Homer and Virgil, and enraged at the German commentators, your criticisms and Breitinger's came into my hands. Having once read, or rather devoured them, they were always at my left hand, to be continually turned over, while Homer and Virgil were at my right. How often I then wished, and still wish, for your proposed treatise on the Sublime! But Milton, (whom, perhaps, I should too late have seen, if you had not translated him,) when accidently he fell into my hand, blew up at once the fire which had been kindled by Homer, and raised my soul to heaven and the poetry of religion. Often did I then behold the image of an epic poet, such as you have described in your critic poem, and I looked at it, as Cæsar on the bust of Alexander, in tears."

Whatever influence Milton's example had, in giving a religious direction to the genius of the young German, was owing to a prior and profound susceptibility. He had, in his childhood, become so familiar with the Scriptures, and their poetical descriptions "were," says Bodmer, "so strongly impressed upon his mind, that when the things themselves came before his eyes, he would often say they were not new to him—he had already *seen* them in the Psalms and the prophets. When he approached to manhood, the pathetic passages took the same strong hold on his heart as the glittering and mag-

nificent images had before taken on his fancy. A promise that fallen man should find mercy drew tears from his eyes; a trace of the immortality of the soul threw him into a transport of gratitude. Religion did not remain a mere speculation of the brain; it was a clear view of the greatness and glory of the Messiah; it was the pure feeling of love and grateful adoration."

The subject finally chosen for his poem was the "Messiah," a name that now ranks first in the series of great modern poems in the German language. After leaving college, in his twenty-first year, he spent a few months at the University of Jena. He designed to study theology there, but the elevation of his religious feelings could not accord with the cold and scholastic subtilties which then formed the theological attraction of the University. "He wanted no evidence," says one of his biographers, "to prove the truth of a religion which had taken entire possession of his heart, and he could not listen with patience to the cavils of infidels or the reasonings of metaphysicians." Withdrawing from the dialectic contentions of the learned doctors of the University, he consecrated himself in the stillness of his studio to the great mission of his life—the epic of the "Messiah." He sketched the first three cantos, and wrote them out in prose. From the retirement of his study he would frequently go forth into the rural neighborhoods of Jena, and, wander-

ing about in meditative walks, trace out in his mind the imagery of his poem. In one of these walks, after several trials at other meters, he resolved to adopt that of the great epics of antiquity. He immediately transformed one of his pages into hexameters, and continued the composition in this measure—the first successful experiment of that versification in the German language.

In his twenty-second year he left Jena for the University of Leipsic, carrying with him the first three books of his poem. Here he became a member of a small literary society, of which his friends, Schmidt, Cramer, Gärtner, Schlegel, Giesecke, Zachariae, Gellert, and Rabener, were the chief supporters. His cantos were shown to a few of these friends, and excited so much interest, that others were intent on seeing them; and at last they were seized, by a species of violence, and read aloud in his own chamber. They were afterward published in "The Bremen Contributions," a periodical conducted by the society.

In his twenty-fourth year he left Jena, and retired into a secluded life, at Langensalze, where he had charge of the education of a friend's children. But while in this retreat, "his Messiah," says his biographer, "excited such a degree of attention as no other book had ever awakened in Germany. Friends and enemies, admirers and critics, appeared on all hands. Young preachers quoted it in the

pulpit, and Christians loved to read it as a book which afforded them, amid the rage of controversy, some scope for devout feeling. By a class of divines it was condemned as a presumptuous fiction; and the partisans of the grammarian Gottsched raised still greater clamors against the work, on account of its language; while the Swiss critics, on the other hand, extolled it to the greatest degree. Bodmer, the translator of Milton, in particular, embraced the cause of the German epic bard with enthusiastic ardor, and contributed greatly to the celebrity of the poem."

Though but three cantos were yet published, and they only in a periodical magazine, Klopstock had at once, and in his twenty-fourth year, achieved an immortal fame. He was recognized as the Milton of his country; the charge against the German mind, of incapacity for high poetic excellence, was refuted; his name was forever to stand first in the list of great modern German bards. "He idealized the German character," says a critic, "as no other one has ever done—he created for the Germans a new, strong, free, and genuine poetic language;" and an illuminated path was now opened for that series of splendid native poets who soon began to follow him—Goethe, Wieland, Schiller, etc.

Meanwhile how did the young bard bear his successes? "Poetry," another German has said, "is like the pearl in the oyster—a painful disease;"

and the precious formations of genius are often abstracted out of the life-energy of the bard. He wins the perpetuity of fame; but it is not unfrequently like the preservation of the golden-winged insect, petrified in amber. Dante, Petrarch, Byron, under the soft skies of Italy, moving with souls of fire amid its desolate memories and passionate influences, were less happy than the lazzaroni, lounging away their lives in indolence. Klopstock was of a healthy mental constitution, though his mind was incandescent, if we may so speak, with the fire of genius and the glow of ardent sympathies. Even in hoary age his friends called him "the forever youthful." Still, at this period of his success and young life, a profound consciousness of the emptiness of even the purest fame oppressed him; his heart clung with conscious dependence to the hopes of religion, the affection of friends, and longed for the sympathy of woman's love. While the first sensation produced by the disclosure of his genius was spreading through Europe, and critics were wrangling in conflicting speculations on the new sign in the heavens, which had shone out upon them with the suddenness and splendor of a comet, he continued buried in his retirement at Langensalze "in deep melancholy," silent and indifferent to the critical clamors around him, writing pathetic odes, and cherishing the sadness of his thoughts. His friend Cramer

alludes to this period of his history when he remarks: "I could wish to know from what causes it arises, that, in many persons who are remarkable for sensibility and strong powers of imagination, precisely at that period when the body is in its greatest vigor, and the animal spirits are the most lively—when the prospect of all the delights of honor and friendship is the most fair and blooming, and when the termination of these enjoyments appears at the greatest distance—*that* period is, nevertheless, frequently the time of melancholy reflections, of familiarity with the grave, and habitual contemplation of death. This 'youth forever,' whose age even now shines with all the brightness of a fine spring morning, and who, with the well-regulated disposition of a wise man, his brow never clouded with melancholy or ill-humor, gathers all the flowers of joy, was formerly wrapped in the mourning attire of Young. Never did he more seriously reflect on the instability of all earthly things, or on the importance of eternity. Many times did he *then* dip his pencil in the darkest colors, while on the richest and most beautiful night-pieces he painted—death."

But a new and brighter epoch was at hand in the young poet's life—literary success, royal patronage, precious friendships, and, above all, the smiles and affections of love were about to irradiate his career. His subsequent history exhibits one of the finest

pictures of married life on record; and it is more in reference to this than to his literary claims that we have introduced him to our readers. The farther outlines of his life will be chiefly in delineation of another character—his "angelic Meta," made immortal in his poetry and his biography. His acquaintance with her was preceded by a transient but vivid passion for another. Both cases afford a biographic passage which is entitled to rank among the most significant examples of the loves of the poets.

Tacitus records the respect of the ancient Germans for woman. In the modern development of the German mind the sentiment is not less strong. Its literature is imbued, not merely with the gallantry of love, like that of most other nations, but the noble courtesy of the passion, which we associate with the age of chivalry, survives in it—a sort of reverence for the sex which partakes somewhat of the religious sentiment itself. The German poet would recognize in woman a nature distinct from that of man. Her finer organization, quicker perceptions and insight, greater moral courage and purer affections, indicate to him something preterhuman, if not divine. She is an angel to him, not only in the ideal affections of poetry, but often in the severer speculations of his philosophy. Klopstock was every inch a German. Young, glowing with the ardor of poetical and religious feeling, the

vision of a beautiful, "a tender, holy maid," as he calls her, rose before him in his solitude at Langensalze; and though the first object of his affection was his own cousin, the sister of his dearest literary friend, Schmidt, and, therefore, one with whom it might be supposed he was on terms of sufficient familiarity to allow of the usual frankness and persiflage of youthful courtship, yet, with a true German's heart, he stands at a distance and in silence, loving, reverencing, adoring the "holy maid." His correspondents are made acquainted with his passion, but she knows it not. Beautiful odes to her come glowing from his pen, are received by his distant literary friends, find their way into the magazines, and are sung by maiden lips throughout Germany, but are unknown to her.

This "heavenly girl," as he often styles her, must have possessed rare charms of both person and mind. In one of his letters to Bodmer he says: "She has a certain character of beauty which distinguishes her from all others. I can no otherwise describe it to you, at present, than by saying that it corresponds with what I have said of her in my songs." In one of these songs he describes her as "young and beautiful," with an "all-powerful, all-subduing look of soul," which he pronounces "an emanation of divinity;" her "every movement speaks the heavenly temper of her mind;" she is "serene as the unruffled air, bright as the

dawn, full of simplicity as nature's self," etc. His letters, about this period, incessantly refer to her. "She is not accessible to me," he says to Bodmer, "nor likely to be so; for fortune separates us widely; yet without her I am miserable." Bodmer attempts to console him. The poet replies: "Your letter, the consciousness that my love is exalted and pure, and my sense of religion, prevent my being completely miserable. She knows but little of my sentiments, or if she has discovered them, she does not let me know it; but she is capable of feeling them all. How would she feel your letter, if I had courage to read it to her! and, if she loved me, how would she look on me with those eyes so full of soul!" He writes a sweet ode to her, but, instead of presenting it, sends it away to his friend in Switzerland, remarking, "She who could best reward it has not seen it, so timid does her apparent insensibility make me;" but beneath this ode are sent, also, some lines from the manuscript of the Messiah, rendered notable and endeared to him because his "beloved critic" made him "read them several times over to her." "O!" he exclaims, "how has this heavenly maiden captivated my whole soul! Without her I should be as unhappy as I am capable of being." Bodmer, fearing that the violence of his feelings might affect his health and the progress of his "Messiah," writes a letter to her, directed to the care of the poet; but he

could not present it. "Much as it delighted me," he says, "much as I wished to be able to give it to her, and much as she herself would have prized it, I had not courage."

A critic wrote an Italian review of his "Messiah." "Love," he writes, "bids me beg of you to send me the Italian review while I remain here. Perhaps the divine maiden may smile upon these trophies." And again he writes, "I cannot deny that I am sometimes astonished at the degree of tenderness that I feel for this angelic woman." Her occasional commendations of his writings fill him with rapture. He observes, with deep emotion, that she smiles with pleasure when she hears him praised, and his heart beats with pride when a remark escapes her in which he is compared to Milton.

Here was love, beyond all doubt; and many a romantic dolt, under similar circumstances, would consider himself in a desperate extremity, with but one alternative — success or suicide. Our poet felt profoundly the "apparent insensibility" of the "angelic woman." "I must await my fate," he says, "though I have never found any thing more difficult." But he found support in his religious principles. "What peace I have hitherto enjoyed," he writes to a friend, "has been chiefly the consequence of the following thought: when by a taste for virtuous deeds, and

by some trifling good actions which to us are not difficult—though to the vulgar they appear so—we have made a show of appearing to be virtuous, then Providence seizes our whole heart, and puts this great question to us, Whether we will *here*, too, submit—whether we will be virtuous even *here?* You see that this is a very comprehensive thought; but yet, when I measure my love against it, I wonder that it has power to support me."

Yet this support would hardly have sufficed, had he not entertained some hopes of success. His friend Schmidt, brother to the young lady, approved his affection, and undertook to write to her on the subject. The poet himself ventured, at last, to present her an ode. She received it with kindness, with "a little confusion, a slight blush, and some almost tender looks." The perception of women in matters of love, is as quick as intuition. She understood him; but her heart, it seems, was elsewhere. She was afterward married to another; and Klopstock, quite broken down, prepared to retire to his friend Bodmer, in Switzerland, declaring, "I will love only once in my life."

"Miserable!" "Completely miserable!" "Love only once" in thy life! This language is not for thee, thou great-souled man; it is the proper speech only of those who have less brains than heart, and who, thus failing, make life a failure, and know no better consummation for it than the

lover's leap. Better things are prepared for thee; thou art to utter a hymn to all ages; royalty is to woo thee to its palaces, fame is to applaud thy name; thou shalt be "*den ewigen Jungling*," "the youth forever;" thou shalt again love and be loved. A beautiful soul, young, ardent, and saintly, already loves thee. She sits in her chamber at Hamburg, weeping over thy pages. She has read the great poets of Italy, France, England, and has found thee one like unto them in her own noble tongue. Thou shalt find her an angel, such as thou hast not seen in thy holiest visions; she shall exalt thine ideas of humanity; her presence shall sanctify thy youth, and her memory thine old age. She shall love thee with angelic affection; she shall die for thee, and die blessing thee.

"I will love only once in my life," said Klopstock, when he proposed to seek a retreat with Bodmer at Zurich. But here is another letter, written to another person some months later: "You are dearer to me than all who are connected with me by blood or by friendship, dearer to me than all which is dear to me besides in the creation! My sister, my friend, you are mine by love, by pure and holy love, which Providence—ah, how grateful I am for the blessing! has made the inhabitant of my soul on earth. It appears to me that you were born my twin sister in paradise. At present, indeed, we are not there; but we shall return thither. Since we have so

much happiness here, what shall we have there? My Meta, my forever beloved, I am entirely thine!"

So much for the sanitary influence of time on the wounds of a broken heart, provided that it is accompanied with a tolerable strength of brain. Every man, as a rule, has his own Eve somewhere in the world, and every woman her Adam. If we fail of the discovery in one instance, let us have patience and try again. A little time is often of marvelous efficacy in such cases. No man ever felt more romance than Klopstock, and no one ever wrote more than Sir Walter Scott; yet the former, after believing himself heart-broken forever, found the "twin sister of his soul," and lived and loved again; and the latter, after a similar failure of first love, allied himself with a little French dame, lived a comfortable life amid his children, his books, and his dogs at Abbottsford, and acknowledged that, though his heart had been broken at first, "it was handsomely pieced the second time." As he visited, in a coasting pleasure excursion, the locality where his first love used to reside, he wrote home to his family this significant remark, "I have been here before. Whew!"

Klopstock went to Zurich, where he spent several months with his friend Bodmer. His Messiah had produced a profound impression in Switzerland. "The people there," says one of his biographers,

"viewed him with a kind of veneration," and "much exertion was made to induce him to remain;" but more brilliant fortunes awaited him. The Danish embassador, Bernstorff, had read, in Paris, the first three cantos of the Messiah. He immediately perceived the promise of its author, recommended him to the favorite minister of the court of Denmark, and through him to the king, by whom the poet was called to reside at Copenhagen, on a pension which rendered him independent, and secured him leisure for the completion of his poem.

It was while on his route to Copenhagen, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, that he met, for the first time, the "Meta" of his letters, the "Cidli" of his poems—the "lovely and accomplished Margaretta Möller, who afterward made him the happiest of men." This maiden was one of the purest, loveliest beings that God ever gave to our world—one from whom we may derive some conception of the nature and moral loveliness of angels. We hesitate as we approach the description of her incomparable character. It is too sacred for an unskillful pen. We shall, however, let her reveal it as much as possible in her own words.

The character of the German woman is distinctively peculiar and national. The very lowest class of the sex in Germany are what they are

elsewhere in Europe—hardy drudges, sharing the out-door toils of their husbands. But among the women of the middle and higher classes are found traits of character not surpassed by those of any other nation of Europe. Among them are found, of course, a large class of the superficial beings that make up the gay world, so-called, and not unfrequent examples of the excess of that ideal sentimentality which seems inherent in the German intellect, and forms the chief characteristic of the Countess Hahn-Hahn's pictures of German society; but the prevailing traits of the German woman are profound moral feeling, tending strongly to abiding love and religion; an affection that clings to its first romance through married life; a romantic interest in literature and literary men, combined often with an extent of learning which would entitle a man to be called a scholar in any other country; a love of home comforts and endearments, with an unfailing aptitude to provide them; and a strong feeling of that love and pride for their own country which Tacitus ascribes to their ancient mothers. The French woman recognizes in love little else than its gallantry; to the English woman it is a sober affection, with its sober household obligations; the German woman dreams of it as Wieland did of the "Affinity of Souls," and better than Goethe dreamed of "Elective Affinities;" and this dream, if such it should be called, lasts usually through her life,

irradiating its duties and its sorrows. "There is hardly a German woman," says a writer, "from the top to the bottom of the social ladder, who would not consider it as the greatest insult which could be offered her, for any one to doubt her having experienced what they call an internal life. To this peculiarity may be ascribed the circumstance that gossip—at least of the commoner kind—occupies a less prominent place in the conversation of German women than in that of the women of England or France. While an English or a French woman will inform you how much 'Lord So-and-so' is in debt, or the probability of 'Captain What-ye-call-him' paying his addresses to 'Mademoiselle Chose,' a German matron will treat you to an account of how her husband's passion for her first manifested itself—how the fire, after smoldering awhile in a sweet unconsciousness, at last burst forth into a mutual flame. She will describe to you the change which her feelings underwent after her *verlobung*, (betrothal,) and after she became a wife and mother; and this with the most perfect simplicity, without any intention of exciting astonishment or admiration, and probably upon what an English woman would consider a very casual acquaintance. It is a subject which interests her more than any other; of which she is constantly thinking, and of which she freely speaks."

Margaretta Möller combined in herself the best traits of the German feminine character. She was devout, learned, enthusiastic, confiding, simple-hearted, and domestic. She corresponded in English with Young, the poet, and Richardson, the author of "Clarissa." In her letters to the latter she gives, with all the naive frankness of her German heart, an account of her first acquaintance with Klopstock. "You would know," she says, "all that concerns me. Love, dear sir, is all that concerns me, and love is all that I will tell you in this letter. In one happy night I read my husband's poem — the Messiah. I was extremely touched with it. The next day I asked one of his friends who was the author of it; and this was the first time I heard Klopstock's name. I believe I fell immediately in love with him; at least, my thoughts were ever filled with him; but I had no hope ever to see him, when, quite unexpectedly, I heard that he would pass through Hamburg. I wrote immediately to the same friend to procure me the means of seeing the author of the Messiah. He told him that a certain girl in Hamburg wished to see him, and for a recommendation, showed him some letters, in which I made bold to criticise Klopstock's verses. Klopstock came, and came to me. This had its effect." The German maiden lost fully her heart, at this first interview, if she had not lost it before. "After having seen him two hours,"

she continues, "I was obliged to pass the evening in company, which had never been so wearisome to me before. I could not speak—I could not play. I thought I saw nothing but Klopstock. I saw him the next day, and the following, and we were very seriously friends; but on the fourth day he departed. It was a strong hour, the hour of his departure." A correspondence ensued, "during which," she says, "I sincerely believed my love to be friendship. At last Klopstock said that he loved, and I started, as for a wrong thing." In one year after their first interview the poet again visited Hamburg. "We saw we were friends, we loved, and we believed that we loved," writes the frank-hearted girl; "and a short time after, I could even tell Klopstock that I loved. But we were obliged to part again, and wait two years for our wedding. My mother would not let me marry a stranger. At this time, knowing Klopstock, she loves him as her own son, and thanks God that she has not persisted. We married, and I am the happiest wife in the world. In a few months it will be four years that I have been so happy, and I still dote upon Klopstock as if he were my bridegroom. If you knew my husband you would not wonder. If you knew his poem, I could describe him very briefly, in saying he is, in all respects, what he is as a poet. This I can say with all wifely modesty; but I dare not speak of my hus-

band—I am all raptures when I do it. And as happy as I am in love, so happy am I in friendship —in my affection for my mother, for two elder sisters, and for five other women. How rich I am! Sir, you have willed that I speak of myself: but I fear that I have done it too much. Yet you see how it interests me."

A few letters between the poet and his betrothed have come to light. They breathe an ardent affection sanctified, by the highest religious feeling. On the last evening of the interview above mentioned, she wrote him as follows: "I must write to you this evening, and you shall find my letter at Copenhagen. My soul leans upon yours. This is the evening on which we read your Ode to God. Do you remember it? You will leave me, but I shall again receive you, and receive you as your wife. Alas! after another day, you will be gone far, far from me, and it will be long before I shall see you again; but I must restrain my grief; God will be with you —your God and mine. I trust in our gracious God that he will restore you to me; that he will make me happy. He knows that through you I shall be continually improving. He has already bestowed upon us so much happiness that I trust he will complete our felicity. Begin, then, your journey; only let me weep; I cannot help it. God be with you." After an attack of illness, she wrote him: "I did not expect to be ever again as well as I now

am. Praised be our God for it! and you will praise him with me. Yesterday evening, when I had retired from company, and enjoyed a very delightful hour, I said to myself, 'Perhaps my K. is now worshiping God with me;' and at that thought my devotions became more fervent. How delightful it is to address ourselves to God—to feel his influence on our minds. Thus how happy may we be even in this world! You say rightly, if our happiness is so great here, what will it be hereafter? And then we shall never be separated! Farewell, my beloved! I shall think of you continually to-morrow. The holiest thoughts harmonize with my idea of you—of you who are more holy than I am—who love our Creator not less than I do—more I think you cannot love him—not more, but in a more exalted manner. How happy am I to belong to you! Through you I shall be continually advancing in piety and virtue. I cannot express the feelings of my heart on this subject; but they are very different from what they were half a year ago. Before I was beloved by you, I dreaded my greatest happiness; I was uneasy lest it should draw me away from God. How much was I mistaken! It is true that adversity leads us to God; but such felicity as mine cannot withdraw me from Him, or I could not be worthy to enjoy it. On the contrary, it brings me nearer to him. The sensibility, the gratitude, the joy, all the feelings at-

tendant on happiness, make my devotion the more fervent."

The poet's ardent and devout heart responded with similar language. Every despondent memory of the disappointment of his former love is gone. "With what transport," he exclaimed, "do I think of you, my Meta, my only treasure, my wife! When, in fancy, I behold you, my mind is filled with the heavenly thoughts which so often and delightfully occupy it; and while I think of you they are still more fervent, more delightful. They glow in my breast, but no words can express them. With what sweet peace of mind do I contemplate, in every point of view, the thought that you are mine—that I am yours! O Meta, how entirely are you formed to make me happy! and you are bestowed upon me! Can there be so much happiness here below? Yet, what is the greatest earthly happiness to that which we hope to enjoy in a future state? Yes, my beloved, forever!"

During some three years did this affectionate correspondence continue. Klopstock remembered no more his former resolution, "to love but once in his life." All the poetical ardor of his soul was lavished upon the beautiful and sweet-hearted girl; and she who was, according to contemporary writers, "Klopstock in feminine beauty," reciprocated his tenderness with an affection, admiration, an adoration even, next only to that which her devout

spirit paid to God himself. They were married in the summer of 1754.

Having now passed through the courtship of our hero, we ought to drop the pen in haste, according to the canons of a certain cynical school of writers; for no love, according to their philosophy, can long survive marriage. But the beauty, the romance of the scene has only dawned thus far; and the further history of Margaretta Klopstock presents a picture of wedded love which an angel might gladly contemplate. It is an abominable perversion, practised upon society and against God, that is implied in much of the modern light literature, which, under the extravagant forms of the novel, pretends to picture human life, and in which it seems a settled doctrine, that "the holy state of matrimony" is, and of necessity must be, a holy state of unhappiness—a tame, if not a worse termination of the young affections and hopes of the heart. It is assumed by even more critical writers sometimes, that men and women of genius, as, for instance, Madame de Staël, Mrs. Hemans, Mrs. Norton, find it an intolerable relation; and examples of conjugal infelicity are given from Socrates to Milton, and from Milton to Coleridge.

Men of genius are often the poorest possible specimens of those fine ideals of character which they portray. They are irritable, whimsical, and not unfrequently absolutely lunatic. It is not to

be wondered at, therefore, that a relation involving the most delicate sentiments, the highest obligations, should be marred by their infirmities; their other relations in society share as often the same fate. Still, literary biography abounds in examples of wedded love; examples in which some of the highest minds have shown the highest affection and attained their highest experience of life—men who like Heine, one of Germany's greatest scholars and critics, have wept broken-hearted over the graves of their beloved. Heine, in the height of his success and European reputation, revisiting the tomb of his "Theresa," who had shared his early poverty and struggles, wrote: "Here, then, reposes what is left of the dearest that Heaven gave me; amid the dust of her four children she sleeps. I could have continued at her grave forever; there where it cheered me to think that one day I shall rest by her side. Her love was the strongest, truest, that ever inspired the heart of woman, and made me the happiest of men." Alluding to their early common sufferings, he exclaims, "When tears flowed over our cheeks, did not a nameless, seldom-felt delight stream through my breast, oppressed equally by joy and by sorrow!" Even Milton, though driven by his domestic afflictions into sad heresies about marriage, knew how to appreciate its blessedness, and has described it with the best beauty and dignity of his verse:

"Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In paradise, of all things common else.
By thee adulterous love was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets.

* * * * *

Here Love his golden shafts employs; here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings;
Reigns here and revels."

Klopstock had all the ardor and romance of youthful affection, as we have seen, and few writers have had more of the fine sensitiveness of genius than he; yet his married life was a picture of the purest felicity. There are not extant facts enough, respecting this part of his history, to allow us to construct it into a detailed narrative, but we have many incidental and delightful glimpses of it.

In her charming letters to Richardson, Meta shows an almost idolatrous love of her husband, accompanied with the highest reverence for his character. She speaks warmly of her friends, but "in them all finds much to pardon, except in Klopstock alone. He is good, really good," she adds—"in all his actions, all the foldings of his heart. I know him, and sometimes think that, if we knew others in the same way, the better we

should find them." Four years after her marriage, she exclaims, "How rich am I!" "I am the happiest wife in the world." "I still dote upon Klopstock as if he were my bridegroom." "No one of my friends is as happy as I am; but no one had the courage to marry as I did." In another of these letters she affords us a glance at their domestic life: "It will be a delightful occupation for me," she says, "to make you more acquainted with my husband's poem. No one can do it better than I, being the person who knows the most of that which is not published. I am always present at the birth of the young verses, which begin by fragments here and there of a subject of which his soul is just then filled. He has many great fragments of the whole work ready. You may suppose that persons who love as we do, have no need of two rooms; we are always in the same; I with my little work, still, only regarding my husband's sweet face," which she describes as expressive, at such times, "of all the sublimity of his subject," and often wet with tears prompted by his inspired emotions. These young verses, she states, are read by the poet to her, "he suffering my criticisms."

The reader will infer justly from this deference of the poet to the criticisms of his young wife, that he found in her not only an ardent heart, but also a cultivated mind. Her letters indicate that she was familiar with at least four modern tongues.

Her enthusiasm for the "Messiah," which led to her introduction to and love of Klopstock, is proof of her intelligence and discrimination. Her published writings, which are, besides her correspondence, a Dialogue with Klopstock on Fame, and Letters from the Dead, are replete with the noblest sentiments, and marked by a discernment, a justness of thought, that we should hardly have expected in one whose letters show such ardor of feeling. "I earnestly wish," says Klopstock after her death, "that I could recollect some of her serious conversations with me, so as to write them down; for what a heart had she, and what a quick, and, at the same time, accurate understanding!" She elsewhere says of her criticisms on the "Messiah:" "As he knows that I delight to hear whatever he composes, he always reads it to me immediately, though it be often only a few verses. He is so far from being opinionated, that on this first reading I am to make my criticisms, just as they come into my head." The poet, in quoting these remarks, adds, "How much do I lose in her, even in this respect! How perfect was her taste—how exquisitely fine her feelings! She observed every thing, even to the slightest turn of the thought. I had only to look at her, and could see in her face when even a syllable pleased or displeased her; and when I led her to explain the reason of her remarks, no demonstration could be more true, more accurate, or more

appropriate to the subject. But, in general, this gave us very little trouble; for we understood each other, when we had scarcely begun to explain our ideas."

During the four years of their married life they were never separated except for two months, which were near the close of her life. Her letters to Klopstock, during this period of absence, breathe all the fervor of first love. They were written under circumstances of much indisposition and anxiety. She alludes to these circumstances, with delicate but confiding naiveté, in a letter to Richardson about this time: "Have you not guessed," she asks him, "that I, in summing up all my happiness, and not speaking of children, had none? Yes, sir, this has been my only wish not gratified for these four years; I have been more than once unhappy with disappointments; but yet thanks, thanks to God, I am in full hope to be a mother in November. The little preparations—and they are so dear to me!—have taken so much time that I could not answer your letter, nor give you the promised scenes of the 'Messiah;' this is also the reason why I am still here, (in Hamburg;) for properly we dwell at Copenhagen. Our stay here is only a visit, but a long one, which we pay my family. As I am not able to travel yet, my husband has been obliged to make a little voyage to Copenhagen without me. He is yet absent—a cloud over my happiness. He

will soon return, but what does that help? He is yet equally absent. We write each other every post; but what are letters to presence? But I will speak no more of this little cloud; I will only tell my happiness. But I cannot tell you how I rejoice. A son of my dear Klopstock; O, when shall I have him! When I have my husband and my child I will write you more, if God gives me life and health. You will think that I will be not only a mother, but a nurse also; though the latter, (thank God that the former is not so too!) is quite against the fashion and good breeding, and though no one can think it *possible* to be always with the child at home."

Familiar letters, like familiar conversations, are among the best, because the least disguised, exponents of real character. Klopstock himself published the letters written him by his wife during this period of absence and solicitude; though these letters contain but few allusions to her daily life, they reveal so much of her heart that we must give some fragments of them. In the first after his departure, dated August 2, 1758, she writes: "Did you go three times the distance to the post, only to see me for *one minute* more? Do not imagine I think this a small matter. It confirms me in my old suspicion that you love me a little. If you could see me to-day, I know you would love me dearly. No one could know by my

appearance that you had left me. I cannot, indeed, banish the thought of you, nor do I wish to; but I can view it in such a light that it does not disturb me. Our God is with you, and will restore you." August 3: "They waked me this morning to give me your letter, and I got the headache; but that pain was pleasure. Yesterday evening I had some obscure notion of a letter, but could not imagine how it should come. I never thought of Schonburg; but you thought of it! You could not help writing; yes, that is natural, for you love." August 10: "Where are you now? Still in the ship, I fear. Last night it was very, *very* dark. I could not help being anxious about you; but it was not such anxiety as would have been ingratitude for my great happiness; it was tenderness, which I can never cease to feel. God be with you, and grant that I may hear from you on Tuesday; but even if I should not, I shall not be so uneasy as to hurt my health. I was ready by eight o'clock. O if you had come home! How I wished for you! It is hard, very hard, after having lived with you to live without you." August 15: "God be praised! I have your letter. O, what joy! What shall I feel when I have you again! I know not what I write. I received your letter at table; I could eat no more. The tears started from my eyes, and I went into my own room. I could only thank God with my tears; but he understands these." Klopstock

replies: "My Meta, I know how you think of me. I know it by my own feelings. It often comes so strongly into my mind that you are with me, that I am ready to press you to my heart. My only love, what will be the joy of our meeting!" August 24, she writes: "I am getting through all my letters, all my visits, all my employments, agreeable or disagreeable, that when you come I may live for you alone. Yet I will really, in earnest, gladly do without you till moonlight comes, though I tremble in every nerve when I think of seeing you again." Klopstock answers September 2: "My beloved Meta, how sweet it is to receive such letters from you! My confidence that God will spare you to me yet remains, though I cannot say that now and then a cloud does not come over it. There are lighter and heavier hours of trial. These are some of the heaviest. Let us take care, my dear Meta, that we resign ourselves *wholly* to our God. This solemn thought occupies me. What think you of writing on it to each other, to strengthen us? O, how my heart hangs on thine!" Meta replies, September 7, in ominous words: "I shall indeed be in continual misery if September passes without your return. I shall expect to be confined and to die without you. This would destroy all the peace of which I wish to tell you; for, God be praised! I am strong enough to speak of my death. I have omitted it, hitherto, only on your account, and I am

happy that I need no longer refrain from it. Yet let me be as uneasy as I may, do nothing that will hurt your health. I ought not to have told you of my fears, but I find it as impossible in a letter, as when I am with you, to conceal any thing which presses on my heart. I have left no room to tell you of my peace and my courage, but I will do it another time." Klopstock answers her in a letter full of the noblest religious sentiments: "When God gives me grace," he says, "to pursue these ideas, then, Meta, I am not far from thee. He surrounds both thee and me. His hand is over us. God is where you are; God is where I am. He has numbered the hairs of our head. My soul is now in a state of sweet composure, though mixed with some degree of sadness. O my wife, whom God has given me, be not careful, be not careful of the morrow!" A tender though sad reply she sends him: "You must not think that I mean any thing more than that I am as willing to die as to live, and that I prepare myself for both—I am perfectly resigned to either; God's will be done. I often wonder at the indifference I feel on the subject when I am so happy in this world. O what is our religion! What must that eternal state be of which we know so little, while our souls feel so much! More than a life with you! It does not appear to me so hard to leave you and our child, and I only fear that I may lose this peace of mind again, though it has

already lasted eight months. I well know that all hours are not alike, and particularly *the last*, since death in my situation must be far from an easy one; but let the last hour make no impression on you. You know too well how much the body then presses down the soul. Let God give what he will, I shall still be happy. A longer life with you, or eternal life with him! O think where I am going; and, as far as sinners can judge of each other, you may be certain that I go there; (the humble hopes of a Christian cannot deceive;) and thither you will follow me—there we shall be forever united by love. It is with the sweetest composure that I speak of this. How I thank you for that kind permission! I have done. I can write of nothing else. I am perhaps too serious; but it is a seriousness mixed with tears of joy."

Premonitions were these of what soon followed! And yet, though painful, how admirable in their womanly feeling and moral heroism! But let us see more of this pure and ardent spirit as the catastrophe comes on. Three days after she writes: "I hope, yet tremble, for your letter to-day. O take not away my hope! Set off to-morrow. We have had since yesterday the finest weather and the best north-west wind. You will come exactly with the full moon. O set off! Do not rob me of my hope. Make me not unhappy. Let this be the last letter. O come!" In three

days more she writes, "I know not how I shall feel when I see you again. When I think of it I am agitated as when I think of hearing the voice of my child. Yesterday I went an airing for four hours. I could go no other way than the road to Lubeck, though I well knew you could not come so soon. It was not possible for me to drive any other way. Adieu till to-morrow. O may the letter to-morrow tell me that you have set off—that I have written this letter in vain! O my only beloved, come, come, come!" On September 19, Klopstock writes that he is about ready to return: "My soul longs to see you again; but I must not write of this at present; it affects me too much; and I wish to repress this emotion, because I wish to wait with composure and submission for the day of joy. Do the same, my Meta. My hope that God would spare you was yesterday very strong. But I scarcely dare indulge this thought; it affects me too powerfully. Our God will order all things according to his wisdom and love. O what true and peaceful happiness lies in that thought, when we give ourselves entirely to it. I press you to my heart, my Meta."

Copenhagen, September 23: "At length, my Meta, I am in town, to go on board. I expect every moment to be called. Our God will conduct me. O how I love you, and how I rejoice at the thought of our meeting!" Lubeck, September 26:

"I shall soon be in your arms, my only love. God be praised for my prosperous voyage! How I rejoice that I shall see you at last! My Meta, how shall we thank God for having preserved thee to me, and me to thee!"

Meta wrote him, on the same day, one more note, welcoming him. In about two months after its date she was in heaven. The presentiment so sadly but heroically expressed in these letters was realized. She died at the birth of her only child, November 28, 1758. Amid the peculiar sufferings of her last hours her character revealed itself in still saintlier loveliness, if that, indeed, were possible. We know few scenes in the records of death more heroic and more affecting. We may well bow our souls with reverence, as passes before us the scene in which this angel of earth is transfigured, through an ordeal of agony and dissolution into an angel of heaven.

"Her sufferings," says Klopstock, in a letter to Cramer, "continued from Friday till Tuesday afternoon, about four o'clock; but they were the most violent from Monday evening about eight. On Sunday morning I supported first myself and then her, by repeating that, without our Father's will, not a hair of the head could fall; and more than once I repeated to her the following lines from my ode. Once I was so much affected as to be forced to stop at every line:

Though unseen by human eye,
My Redeemer still is nigh;
He has poured salvation's light
Far within the vale of night;
There will God my steps control,
There his presence bless my soul;
Lord, whate'er my sorrows be,
Teach me still to look to thee.

Some affecting circumstances I must omit; I will tell you them some other time. When she had already suffered greatly, I said to her with much emotion, 'The most Merciful is with thee.' I saw how she felt. Perhaps she now first guessed that I thought she would die. I saw this in her countenance. I afterward often told her—as often as I could go into the room and support the sight of her sufferings—how visibly the grace of God was with her. I came in just as she had been bled. A light having been brought near on that account, I saw her face clearly for the first time after many hours. Ah, my Cramer, the hue of death was upon it! But God, who was so mightily with her, supported me too at the sight. She was better after the bleeding, but was soon worse again. I was allowed but very little time to take leave of her. I had some hopes that I might return for another farewell. I shall never cease to thank God for the grace he gave me at this parting. I said, 'I will fulfill my promise, my Meta, and tell you that your life is in danger from extreme weakness.' She heard perfectly, and

spoke without the least difficulty. I pronounced over her the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: 'Now the will of Him who inexpressibly supports thee—his will be done!' 'Let him do according to his will,' she said; 'he will do well.' She said this in a most expressive tone of joy and confidence. 'You have endured like an angel. God has been with you. He will be with you. His mighty name be praised! The most Merciful will support you. Were I so wretched as not to be a Christian, I should now become one.' Something of this sort, and yet more, I said to her, in a strong emotion of transport. 'Be my guardian angel if God permit.' 'You have been mine,' she said. 'Be my guardian angel,' repeated I, 'if God permit.' 'Who would not be so?' said she. I would have hastened away. Eliza [Klopstock's sister] said, 'Give her your hand once more.' I did so, and know not whether I said any thing. I hastened away, and then went into my own room and prayed. At parting she said to me very sweetly, 'Thou wilt follow me.' May my end be like thine! O might I now for one moment weep on her bosom! for I cannot refrain from tears, nor does God require it of me." Such is true love! What romantic fiction ever surpassed this?

Eliza Schmidt, (Klopstock's sister,) who loved her tenderly, was with her during the last hours, and describes them in a letter to Giesecke as fol-

lows: "She endured her sufferings with fortitude and resignation seldom equaled. Klopstock, who determined not to leave her, could not support it. He went out and came in again all night long. About ten in the morning, from extreme fatigue, no doubt, she had some faintings; but they lasted only a short time, and then she came to herself again. She was always patient. She smiled on Klopstock, kissed his hand, and spoke quite cheerfully. Now the trying scene began. Klopstock went in and informed his wife that her life was in danger. She answered, with perfect composure, 'What our God wills is right.' They took leave of each other, but that I will not describe. When he was gone I went to the bed and said, 'I will stay with you.' 'God bless you for it, my Eliza!' said she, and she looked at me with the calm, serene smile of an angel. She then said to me, 'Is my death, then, so near?' 'I cannot pronounce that,' I answered. 'Yes, my husband has told me all that may happen. I know all.' 'I know, too, that you are prepared for all. You will die tranquil and happy.' 'O, God must then forgive me much; but I think of my Redeemer, in whom I trust.' At one time she said, 'I do not feel much, Eliza; very little.' 'O that is well! God will soon help you.' 'Yes, *into heaven*,' she replied. Now she was still, but appeared to feel pain. Soon after she laid her head back and said, '*It is*

over!' and at the same moment her face became so composed that the change was observable to every one. A moment before it expressed nothing but pain, now nothing but peace. I began to pray in short exclamations, such as she had taught me; and thus, after a few minutes, she died, so softly, so still, so calm. On Monday she was buried with her son in her arms."

The same lady wrote to Klopstock's mother: "The night before her death I was alone with her. She suffered much, but with great composure. She talked a good deal with me. O, happy hours which God gave me with her, even then, though deeply tinged with sorrow! Among other things she said, 'O, Eliza, how should I now feel if I had not employed the whole nine months in preparing for my death! Now my pains will not suffer me to pray so continually, to think so worthily of God, as I am at other times accustomed, and would now most wish to do.'" Klopstock says, to Giesecke, that he hastened away to Altona "the evening after my Meta's death, after seeing my dead son, but not my wife. I dreaded too much the return of that image. Twice or thrice my Meta looked at me without saying a word, and then to heaven, in such a manner that it is utterly impossible for me to describe it. I understood her *perfectly*. I cannot tell you with what a mingling of sorrow, of confidence in God, and of certainty

that she was dying, she looked from me to heaven. Never, never—though often in sorrow and in joy have I looked up with her to heaven—never did I see her *so*. The situation of a dying person is so *singular*, it seems to belong neither to this world nor to the next."

A rare, a transcendently beautiful character must this young German woman have possessed, if we may judge from the intimations scattered through the correspondence of Klopstock and his friends. Several of the latter, who were among the most eminent German literati of that age, deplored her death as they would that of an endeared sister or daughter. Frinke called her "our angel," and declared she possessed every perfection of the womanly heart. Johanna v. Rahn, Klopstock's sister, says, "I loved her more than if she had been my own sister." Giesecke wept over her as a "departed saint." "What a friend have I myself lost in her!" he exclaims to Klopstock. "Our blessed sister," says Rahn. "Our sainted friend!" exclaims Cramer. "How much satisfaction does it afford me," writes one of her friends, "that I have enjoyed an acquaintance with this heroic woman!" "She was entirely formed for my son," says the poet's mother. "She was ripe for her birth into the life of an angel," writes the linguist Frinke, "for how happy was she during the latter years of her life, and almost to the hour of her translation!

I am certain that your connection is one of those few whose duration must be eternal." "That angel!" he again exclaims; "how many virtuous friends she had!" "O, she was all the happiness of my life," writes the bereaved poet; "what have I not lost in losing her!"

We attempt no explanation of her presentiment of her fate. In her Letters from the Dead, written during her husband's absence, but which he accidentally discovered, is one addressed to her child, on the presumption that she should die at its birth.

Klopstock mourned her during thirty-three years of widowed life. "To the last," says one of his biographers, "he loved to speak of his Meta, and pleased himself by planting white lilies on her grave." His mind was fascinated by the memory of this beloved woman, as with an entrancing vision; and now that the grave had withdrawn her endeared presence, he relieved the painful absence by writing a series of pathetic letters to her departed spirit. They have been published. In one of them he exclaims: "Ah, Meta! dost thou not still love me? love me so that thy soul, though in heaven, longs for me? How sweet, how inexpressibly sweet the thought! Yes, thou art forever mine—thou wert made for me, my now quite heavenly love! O that it would come, the moment of our meeting; that moment full of joy

beyond expression! O that it would come!" Again he writes: "The idea of thee, when thou wert near death, at that moment of thy great strengthening, often appears to me much more affecting than it was at the moment I first saw thee. I have need of all that is sweet and enchanting in the thought of the resurrection and of the almighty Awakener, to free myself from this image. Let him who knows not yet the bliss of the resurrection, who has not tasted its comforts, let him see a friend or wife die, and he will learn it."

Klopstock continued his residence at Copenhagen, with the patronage of the court, till 1771, when he returned to Hamburg. His royal pension was, however, continued. The Margrave of Baden invited him to Carlsruhe, and made him Counselor in 1775. In about a year he returned to Hamburg, where he finished his "Messiah," and continued the remainder of his life. When nearly seventy years of age he married a near relative of his first wife, as a companion of his infirm age. "He preserved his gentle animation, his fervent piety, and admirable serenity, till the close of his life," says one of his biographers. He spoke of death with composure and with joyful hope. When he apprehended its near approach he sent affectionate messages to his friends, but secluded himself from them all, even the nearest of them, that he might give himself wholly to the

solemnity of the last scene. In this seclusion he continued several weeks, and at last expired in the eightieth year of his life. During a severe conflict with pain, he raised himself in his bed, clasped his hands, and, lifting his eyes to heaven, exclaimed with his failing voice, "Can a woman forget her child, that she should not have pity on the fruit of her womb? Yes, she may forget; but I will not forget thee." He fell back again upon his pillow. The struggle was over. A lethargy spread through his frame, and he was no more. A funeral pageant "such as Germany had never witnessed for any man of letters" attended his remains to the grave, where his dust now mingles with that of her whom he loved and mourned through his life.

IV.

MARY SOMERVILLE—WOMAN AND SCIENCE.

MARY SOMERVILLE'S name is familiar throughout the civilized world; and her remarkable life, of scientific study and success, has often been sketched as a demonstration of woman's capacity for the highest intellectual pursuits; but its significance can hardly be exhausted, and it can well bear repeated study as a phenomenon in the history of her sex.

The present century has initiated a new era in the intellectual life of woman. She has not failed, in other periods, to give proof of literary capacity; but the instances, before the present age, have been only occasional, and have appeared, therefore, to be exceptional. In our day women throng the field of the lighter kinds of literary labor. In fiction and poetry their success is no longer disputable. In biography and history, also, they have been taking rank by the side of man. Occasional examples, like that of Mary Somerville, show that they may aspire to the highest attainments of the masculine intellect, to the loftiest regions of abstract science. She says: "I was intensely ambitious to excel in something, for I felt, in my own

breast, that women were capable of taking a higher place in creation than that assigned to them in my early days, which was very low."

In several respects Mary Somerville's success should be an example, a provocation, to the intellectual ambition of her sex; for it is not attributable to extraordinary advantages, or even to exceptional circumstances. Intellectually she made herself, by means which are within the reach of most women of the middle class; for, though of "gentle blood," practically she pertained to that class throughout her life.

She was born in Jedburgh, Scotland, December 26, 1780. Her father was a naval captain, and, therefore, absent from home most of his time. The family lived on a restricted income, at Burnt Island, a small sea-port town on the coast of Fife, immediately opposite Edinburgh. Her mother had no special qualifications for the training of such an intellect as her child subsequently revealed. "My mother," she says, "taught me to read the Bible, and to say my prayers; otherwise she allowed me to grow up a wild creature." When between eight and nine years old, she did not know how to write, and "read very badly." She had amused herself with the Arabian Nights, Robinson Crusoe, and the Pilgrim's Progress. Her father, returning from sea, and mortified at her want of progress during his absence, put her to advanced

reading, but with slight advantage. If she was not an example of mental stupidity at this period of her life, she certainly showed no kind of mental precocity. The compulsory reading of a daily paper of the "Spectator" was such a task "that," she writes in her old age, "I have never since opened the book. Hume's History of England was also a real penance to me. My father, at last, said to my mother, 'This kind of life will never do; Mary must at least know how to write and keep accounts.'" So at ten years of age she was sent to a boarding-school, where it is a wonder that the small amount of intellect she seemed to have was not entirely stultified by the absurd discipline to which she was subjected. "The chief thing I had to do," she says, "was to learn by heart a page of Johnson's Dictionary; not only to spell the words, give their parts of speech and meaning, but, as an exercise of memory, to remember their order of succession." On her return home, after a year of such training, she was reproached with having "cost so much money in vain." "My mother said she would have been contented if I had only learned to write well and keep accounts, which were all a woman was expected to know. I was like a wild animal escaped out of a cage." She complains of even an uncommonly defective memory: "I could remember neither names nor dates." Before she began to

read algebra she had to restudy arithmetic, having forgotten much of it. "I never was expert at addition," she says; "for in summing up a long column of pounds, shillings, and pence in the family account-book, it seldom came out twice in the same way." In her later studies she, of course, used logarithms for the higher branches of science. Here was certainly no portentous sign of genius, nothing like that precocity which is usually supposed to presage a great intellectual career. An intellectual prodigy as a woman, she was apparently below mediocrity as a child. The fact affords a lesson which may well be remembered by parents who grieve over the supposed inferiority of their children.

It is a curious question, to say the least of it, how such a mind came at last to be awakened to higher aspirations and endeavors. It was not by parental remonstrances or compulsory studies, nor by any spasmodic impulse from within or from without. It was entirely by a slow and spontaneous process. After her return from school, "my time," she says, "at Burnt Island was heavy on my hands. I did not know what to do with myself." She spent hours on the sea-shore collecting shells—the beginning of her knowledge of natural history. Her sea-faring father had a passion for flowers, and brought home seeds and bulbs from other parts of the world. She soon shared his

taste, and turned the garden of her home into a studio—the beginning of her knowledge of botany, afterward appreciated and directed by Candolle and similar *savants*. She found a copy of Shakspeare, and the great master inspired her with a love of higher and more varied reading than she had hitherto cared for. There were two small globes in the house; they excited her curiosity, and she learned their use from the village schoolmaster, an evening guest in the family. They were the beginning of the studies which culminated in her immortal works, "The Mechanism of the Heavens," and the "Physical Geography." "My bedroom," she says, "had a window to the south, and a small closet near had one to the north. At these I spent many hours, studying the stars by the aid of the celestial globe." There was a piano in the house; she entertained herself with it until music became a passion with her; and, notwithstanding her poor memory, she could at last "play long pieces without the book." Nasmyth, the artist, opened a school at Edinburgh for ladies; she attended it, hardly as a student, more as a looker-on or an amateur, but in time became an accomplished painter. She casually overheard Nasmyth say to a group of ladies, "You should study Euclid's Elements of Geometry, the foundation not only of perspective, but of astronomy and all mechanical science." Her curiosity was aroused by

the prospect of such a range of inquiry, and she became the only woman in the world, as La Place affirmed, who understood his "Mécanique Céleste."

Thus gradually opened before her the intellectual career in which at last she stood foremost of all the women of her age in scientific fame; the highest example, perhaps—certainly the highest recorded example—of feminine scholarship in the history of the world. But, we repeat, it was without the encouragements or aids that usually prompt youthful genius; it was in the face of severe discouragements. Her love of knowledge soon became an irrepressible passion. "I had to take part in the household affairs," she writes, "and to make and mend my own clothes. I rose early, played on the piano, and painted, during the time I could spare in the daylight hours; but I sat up very late reading Euclid. The servants, however, told my mother, 'It is no wonder the stock of candles is soon exhausted, for Miss Mary sits up reading to a very late hour,' whereupon an order was given to take away my candle as soon as I was in bed. I had, however, already gone through the first six books of Euclid, and now I was thrown on my memory, which I exercised by beginning with the first book, and demonstrating in my mind a certain number of problems every night, till I could nearly go through the whole. My father came home for a short time, and, somehow or other,

finding out what I was about, said to my mother, 'Reg, we must put a stop to this, or we shall have Mary in a strait-jacket some of these days. There was X., who went raving mad about the longitude.'"

There was genuine heroism in these intellectual struggles of a young girl without sympathy, and without the ordinary facilities of study; and there is a touching pathos in her allusion to her surrounding disadvantages. She was trying, half bewildered, to make out some consistent astronomical theory from Robinson's Navigation — her first book of the kind, casually picked up in her home. "As I persevered in studying the book for a time," she says, "I certainly got a dim view of several subjects which were useful to me afterward. Unfortunately not one of our acquaintances or relations knew any thing of science or natural history, nor, had they done so, should I have had courage to ask any of them a question, for I should have been laughed at. I was often very sad and forlorn—not a hand held out to help me." There was, nevertheless, an unseen, divine hand held out to her, as to all who thus struggle upward, and it lifted her at last not only to, but above, the stars to which her faltering studies aspired.

In the circle of her kindred she found but one generous mind which could sympathize with her.

"I spent four or five hours daily at the piano," she says; "and, for the sake of having something to do, I taught myself Latin enough, from such books as we had, to read Cæsar's Commentaries. I went that summer on a visit to my aunt at Jedburgh, and, for the first time in my life, I met in my uncle, Dr. Somerville, a friend who approved of my taste for knowledge. During long walks with him in the early mornings he was so kind that I had the courage to tell him I had been trying to learn Latin, but feared it was in vain; for my brother and other boys, superior to me in talent, and with every assistance, spent years in learning it. He assured me, on the contrary, that in ancient times many women—some of them of the highest rank in England—had been very elegant scholars, and that he would read Virgil with me if I would come to his study for an hour or two every morning before breakfast, which I gladly did. I never was happier in my life than during the months I spent at Jedburgh."

She was beautiful in person as well as in mind; "extremely pretty" in her young womanhood, with "a delicate beauty both of face and figure," and was called the "Rose of Jedburgh." She was, therefore, not without early suitors, and in 1804 was married to her cousin, Samuel Greig. They resided for some years in London, but she had few opportunities to avail herself of its advantages for

her favorite studies. Her life was still a quiet, patient struggle for knowledge under difficulties. She says: "I was alone the whole of the day; so I continued my mathematical and other pursuits, but under great disadvantages; for although my husband did not prevent me from studying, I met with no sympathy whatever from him, as he had a very low opinion of the capacity of my sex, and had neither knowledge of, nor interest in, science of any kind. I took lessons in French, and learned to speak it so as to be understood."

After three years of married life she returned, a widow with two children, to her parental home at Burnt Island, where she resumed her studies with more diligence than ever. Professor Wallace, of Edinburgh University, made her out a catalogue of books in the highest branches of mathematics. The list was formidable, but she procured them and mastered them. They consisted of Francœur's "Pure Mathematics," and his "Elements of Mechanics;" La Croix's "Algebra," and his large work on the "Differential and Integral Calculus," together with his treatise on "Finite Differences and Series;" Biot's "Analytical Geometry and Astronomy;" Poisson's "Treatise on Mechanics;" La Grange's "Theory of Analytical Functions;" Euler's "Algebra," and his "Isoperimetrical Problems" in Latin; Clariault's "Figure of the Earth;" Monge's "Application of Analysis to

Geometry;" Callet's "Logarithms;" La Place's "Mécanique Céleste," and his "Analytical Theory of Probabilities." To how many women in the United States could such a list of books be offered without its being considered a practical joke, or rather an ironical mockery of the conventional estimate of the capacity of the sex for higher education? Could not the number be counted on one's fingers? Are there ten in all the new world? Are there fifty in all the world? Yet it was to the mother of a family, educating herself at home, that Wallace prescribed this course of study! "I was thirty-three years of age," she says, "when I bought this excellent library. I could hardly believe that I possessed such a treasure when I looked back on the day that I first saw the mysterious word, Algebra, and the long course of years in which I had persevered almost without hope. It taught me never to despair. I had now the means, and pursued my studies with increased assiduity; concealment was no longer possible, nor was it attempted. I was considered eccentric and foolish, and my conduct was highly disapproved of by many, especially by some members of my family. As I was quite independent, I did not care for their criticism."

Her second marriage with her cousin, Dr. William Somerville, in 1812, opened a new life before her. He was a man of considerable learning, but

gratefully recognized the superiority of his wife. Their domestic life, though attended by the usual household trials, and at one time by an entire loss of fortune through the treachery of a trusted friend, was a scene of closest mutual sympathy, of joint culture, and the purest happiness. One of their daughters says: "Nothing can be more erroneous than the statement, repeated in several obituary notices of my mother, that Mr. Greig (her first husband) aided her in her mathematical and other pursuits. Nearly contrary was the case. Mr. Greig took no interest in science or literature, and possessed in full the prejudice against learned women which was common at that time. Only on her marriage with my father did my mother at last meet with one who entirely sympathized with her, and warmly entered into all her ideas, encouraging her zeal for study to the utmost, and affording her every facility for it in his power. His love and admiration for her were unbounded; he frankly and willingly acknowledged her superiority to himself, and many of our friends can bear witness to the honest pride and gratification which he always testified in the fame and honors she attained."

Two facts are, then, apparent thus far in the intellectual history of this remarkable woman: first, that she had no precocious capacity for the success which distinguished her career; secondly, that she had not even the ordinary facilities and encourage-

ments of such a career—that down to the time of her second marriage, she prosecuted her studies in the usual domestic circumstances of her sex. Hers was, in fine, a rare, a splendid example of self-education in ordinary life—education up to the loftiest, most erudite, and most difficult attainments of science, without a school, without teachers, without one advantage for study. We know not where to find a similar example in all literary history. This quiet, sublime walk of a modest, and even timid, woman—for such she was—in the common path of the commonplace duties of domestic life, and yet in the widest career of knowledge, compassing the earth and scaling the heavens, is a marvel of intellectual development—a demonstration of the spiritual greatness, the immortal destination of the human soul.

A third fact is worthy of being emphasized, though it has been already indicated; namely, that there was no scientific "hobbyism" in her pursuit of knowledge; no mere indulgence of a special intellectual proclivity, or display of a special mental capacity. She aimed at complete self-culture and universal knowledge. Her collection of shells and minerals in childhood was the necleus of a cabinet of conchology and mineralogy which became one of the principal articles of her domestic furniture in maturer life; and while the mathematics, the abstract sciences, were the chief

field of her fame, she was a technical and accomplished naturalist. It may well be doubted whether any woman of her age excelled her in this department alone. She was a thorough botanist. Geology came up as a science in her day; she began with it nearly at the beginning, kept pace with it down to her ninety-second year, and was one of the first sufferers of public obloquy for its theory of creation, at first misunderstood. She was denounced, by name, from the pulpit of York Cathedral for opinions which are now accepted by all authoritative biblical critics. She not only carefully read, but studied through, the whole varied course of the physical and experimental sciences, down to the most obscure and minute subjects of molecular and microscopic inquiry. Faraday delighted to converse and to correspond with her, as an appreciative authority in his most recondite researches. La Place was proud to correspond with her, as one of the very few minds, in all the intellectual world, who could understand his treatise on the Celestial Mechanism; her reproduction and simplification of that matchless work, in her "Mechanism of the Heavens," was itself, it is said, above the intellectual reach of all France, except a few—Poisson said twenty — mathematical scholars. Sir John Herschell read it with "the highest admiration." "What a pity," he exclaimed, "that La Place did not live to see this illustration of his great work!"

Whewell, on receiving it, said: "When Mrs. Somerville shows herself in the field wherein we mathematicians have been laboring all our lives, and puts us to shame, she ought not to be surprised if we move off to other grounds." Biot was appointed by the *Academie des Sciences*, of Paris, to draw up for it a report on the work. He pronounced it "an astonishing treatise;" La Croix, Legendre, and the other Parisian mathematicians, shared his "vivid and profound admiration." She was forthwith elected a member of most of the learned societies of Europe; the Royal Society of London ordered her bust, from Chantrey, to be placed in their great hall. To her womanhood, her chief joy, amid this universal outburst of applause, in which her kindred, who had hitherto ridiculed her, now enthusiastically joined, was in "the warmth with which Somerville," her husband, entered into her success. "It deeply affected me," she writes, "for not one in ten thousand would have rejoiced at it as he did."

Her "Physical Geography" displayed still more the diversity of her learning. Humboldt read it twice with delight. "It has charmed and instructed me," he wrote. "It showed that, to the great superiority" of its author "in the high region of mathematical analysis," she joined "variety of knowledge in all departments of physics and natural history." Her "Mechanism of the Heavens,"

and her "Connection of the Physical Sciences," were objects of Humboldt's "constant admiration." "I know in no language a work on Physical Geography that can be compared with hers," he said. "The author of 'Cosmos' ought, more than any one else, to hail the 'Physical Geography' of Mary Somerville." He expressed surprise at the correctness of her views of the "Geography of Plants and Animals." She "dominates in these regions, as in astronomy, meteorology, and magnetism."

This versatility of her knowledge, combined as it was with depth and accuracy, is among the wonders of her intellectual character. Her daughter says that, "Although her favorite pursuit, and the one for which she had decidedly most aptitude, was mathematics, yet there were few subjects in which she did not take interest, whether in science or literature, philosophy or politics. She was passionately fond of poetry, her especial favorites being Shakspeare and Dante; also the great Greek dramatists, whose tragedies she read fluently in the original, being a good classical scholar. She was very fond of music, and devoted much time to it in her youth; and she painted from nature with considerable taste. The latter was, perhaps, the recreation in which she most delighted, from the opportunity it afforded her of contemplating the wonderful beauty of the world, which was a never-failing source of intense enjoyment to her, whether she

watched the changing effects of light and shade on her favorite Roman Campagna, or gazed enchanted on the sunsets of the Bay of Naples, as she witnessed them from her much-loved Sorrento, where she passed the last summers of her life. All things fair were a joy to her. The flowers we brought to her from our rambles, the sea-weeds, the wild birds she saw, all interested and pleased her. Every thing in nature spoke to her of that great God who created all things, the grand and sublimely beautiful, as well as the exquisite loveliness of minute objects. Above all, in the laws which science unvails step by step, she found ever-renewed motives for the love and adoration of their Author and sustainer. This fervor of religious feeling accompanied her through life, and very early she shook off all that was dark and narrow in the creed of her first instructors for a purer and happier faith."

A fourth fact, and one to be especially noted, is, that this high intellectual culture and labor—never equaled among women, so far as we know—in no wise interfered with her domestic life, or her duties as woman, wife, and mother. She had the good sense to guard her life not only against any perversion, but against any misconstruction, in this respect. She affected no eccentricities, claimed no exemptions on the score of her intellectual supremacy, but was of the simplest, purest, finest womanly nature. She

brought up a considerable family, and her children blessed her memory. "It would be almost incredible," says one of them, "how much my mother contrived to do in the course of the day. When my sister and I were small children, although busily engaged in writing for the press, she used to teach us for three hours every morning, besides managing her house carefully, reading the newspapers, (for she always was a keen and, I must add, a liberal politician,) and the most important new books on all subjects, grave and gay. In addition to all this, she freely visited and received her friends. She was, indeed, very fond of society, and did not look for transcendent talent in those with whom she associated, although no one appreciated it more when she found it. Gay and cheerful company was a pleasant relaxation after a hard day's work. My mother never introduced scientific or learned subjects into general conversation. When they were brought forward by others she talked simply and naturally about them, without the slighest pretension to superior knowledge. Finally, to complete the list of her accomplishments, I must add that she was a remarkably neat and skillful needlewoman. We still possess some elaborate specimens of her embroidery and lace work."

This symmetrical and truly beautiful life was not without the usual tests of suffering. She buried children and her two husbands, and at last survived

nearly all her early friends. After losing her fortune she was dependent upon a Government pension, first of one thousand, later of fifteen hundred dollars a year, and, for economy, lived many years in Italy. But her intellectual and moral life held on, self-sustained, serene, even felicitous. Its noble habitudes and aims rendered it superior not only to defeat, but even to depression. She was a notable example of the sanative effects of continuous, but prudent, mental labor. She expressed the secret of her whole intellectual history when she said, "I wrote because it was impossible for me to be idle." Work is a condition of happiness, and, to a great extent, of health. It is a law of nature. A naturally superior mind can never be happy without it, whatever blissful exemption vacant heads may have from the salutary necessity, the divine law. Great capability is always accompanied with an instinct for great work, and a consequent sense of distress in idleness. He that would learn the art of happy and healthy living must learn the art of wisely working; not of overwork, indeed, but equally not of underwork. A good medical authority, Dr. Wilks, of Guy's Hospital, has said: "The persons with unstrung nerves, who apply to the doctor, are not the prime minister, the Bishops, judges, and hard-working professional men, but merchants and stock-brokers, retired from business; Government clerks who work

from ten to four; women whose domestic duties and bad servants are driving them to the grave; young ladies whose visits to the village school, or Sunday performances on the organ, are undermining their health; and so on. In short, in my experience I see more ailments arise from want of occupation than from overwork; and, taking the various kinds of nervous and dyspeptic ailments which we are constantly treating, I find at least six due to idleness to one from overwork."

The sense of achievement, especially of achieving something useful to others as well as to ourselves, is an exhilarating, a health-giving consciousness. More effectually than any thing else it expels morbid self-consciousness, and misgivings about the value and results of life. To the thorough worker the so-called "mystery" of life is "an open secret." To him life is probation, and the most obvious condition of that probation is productive, beneficent labor. Most of the wretchedness of human life, among persons of culture, arises from either the lack of enough to do, or from the misfortune of being wrongly placed in their sphere of activity. The fundamental principle of Goethe's theory of education, as developed in "Wilhelm Meister," that it must be conformed to the natural capabilities, and especially to the natural proclivities of the student, applies equally to his subsequent career; for the latter is a continuous process

of self-education for good or evil. To have the heart on the side of one's labor is to redouble the probabilities of success, and to turn labor itself into pleasure.

Mary Somerville had no morbid sensitiveness; she maintained her whole nature in a tranquil, vigorous, wholesome tone by always having something to do. When more than eighty years old, with a fame that filled the civilized world, she proposed still another great work, which would involve the most laborious details of study and research. It was a necessity of her being; one of those necessities which made her life beautiful and blessed.

"I was now," she says, "unoccupied, and felt the necessity of having something to do, desultory reading being insufficient to interest me; and as I had always considered the section on chemistry the weakest part of the 'Connection of Physical Sciences,' I resolved to write it anew. My daughters strongly opposed this, saying, 'Why not write a new book?' They were right; it would have been lost time. So I followed their advice, though it was a formidable undertaking at my age, considering that the general character of science had greatly changed. By the improved state of the microscope, an invisible creation in the air, the earth, and the water, had been brought within the limits of human vision; the microscopic structure of plants and animals had been minutely studied,

and, by synthesis, many substances had been formed of the elementary atoms similar to those produced by nature. Dr. Tyndall's experiments had proved the inconceivable minuteness of the atoms of matter. Mr. Gassiot and Professor Plücher had published their experiments on the stratification of the electric light; and that series of discoveries by scientific men abroad, but chiefly by our own philosophers at home, which had been in progress for a course of years, prepared the way for Bunsen and Kirchhof's marvelous consummation. Such was the field opened to me; but instead of being discouraged by its magnitude, I seemed to have resumed the perseverance and energy of my youth, and began to write with courage, though I did not think I should live to finish even the sketch which I had made. I was now an old woman, very deaf, and with shaking hands. I wrote regularly every morning from eight till twelve or one o'clock, before rising. I was not alone, for I had a mountain sparrow, a great pet, which sat, and, indeed, is sitting on my arm as I write these lines."

When eighty-nine years old she says: "I have still the habit of studying in bed from eight in the morning till twelve or one o'clock; but I am solitary, for I have lost my little bird, who was my constant companion for eight years."

To a poetically inclined critic her sympathy with

the brute creation must appear worthy of special notice as one of her finest traits, and as hardly to be expected in association with her abstract studies and severe mental habits. No lady-lounger of the *boudoir* was ever fonder of pets than this student of the most recondite problems of the universe. Her great soul did not disdain to recognize some affinity between itself and the "mountain sparrow" which sat upon her arm, ate from her lips, or watched, through her studious hours, her pen tracing mathematical diagrams which defined the highest mechanism of the heavens. She repeatedly alludes to it with genuine pathos. "It had both memory and intelligence," she says, "and such confidence in me as to sleep upon my arm while I was writing. My daughter, to whom it was much attached, coming into my room early, was alarmed at its not flying to meet her, as it generally did, and at last, after a long search, the poor little creature was found drowned in the water-pitcher." She gathered almost an aviary of such pets about her, and their life seemed to enter into her own.

"We are fond of birds," she writes, "and have several, all very tame. Our tame nightingales sing beautifully, but, strange to say, not at night. We have also some solitary sparrows, which are, in fact, a variety of the thrush, (*Turdus Cyaneus*,) and some birds which we rescued from de-

struction in spring, when caught and ill used by the boys in the streets; besides, we have our dogs; all of which afford me amusement and interest." In her numerous transitions about middle and southern Italy, she speaks of taking with her "our pet birds" as well as "our servants:" "For I now have a beautiful long-tailed *paroquet*, called Smeraldo, who is my constant companion and is very familiar. And here I must mention how much I was pleased to hear that Mr. Herbert, M. P., has brought in a bill, which has been passed in Parliament, to protect land birds; but I am grieved to find that the lark, which at heaven's gate sings, is thought unworthy of man's protection. Among the numerous plans for education of the young, let us hope that mercy may be taught as a part of religion."

It was a fine sentiment of humanity that led her thus to sympathize with the lower animals, who share so many of our sufferings and so few of our reliefs. Italy was, at this time, addicted to atrocious cruelty toward them. It was the only civilized land in Europe that had no law for their protection. For eight years attempts to provide such a law had been defeated. A new attempt was made, with which Mrs. Somerville heartily co-operated, signing the petition and urging it upon the attention of the aristocratic women of the country. It was, indeed, more than a sentiment of humanity;

it was a sentiment of religion that prompted her interest for these speechless sufferers. With Wesley, Swedenborg, and many other large-minded as well as large-hearted men, she believed in a future compensative life for the brute creation — "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope," but which, with "the whole creation, groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;" "because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." It was not only the mystic light of these intimations of Revelation on the ultimate fate of the living world, that gave Mrs. Somerville sympathetic hope for the lower forms of life; her philosophy sanctioned these sublime utterances.

When about to step into the invisible world she says, with deep pathos as well as philosophy: "We are told of the infinite glories of that state, and I believe in them, though it is incomprehensible to us; but as I do comprehend, in some degree at least, the exquisite loveliness of the visible world, I confess I shall be sorry to leave it. I shall regret the sky, the sea, with all the changes of their beautiful coloring; the earth, with its verdure and flowers; but far more

shall I grieve to leave animals, who have followed our steps affectionately for years, without knowing for certainty their ultimate fate, though I firmly believe that the living principle is never extinguished. Since the atoms of matter are indestructible, as far as we know, it is difficult to believe that the spark which gives to their union life, memory, affection, intelligence, and fidelity, is evanescent. Every atom in the human frame, as well as in that of animals, undergoes a radical change by continual waste and renovation; the abode is changed, not its inhabitant. If animals have no future, the existence of many is most wretched; multitudes are starved, cruelly beaten, and loaded during life; many die under a barbarous vivisection. I cannot believe that any creature was created for uncompensated misery; it would be contrary to the attributes of God's mercy and justice. I am sincerely happy to find that I am not the only believer in the immortality of the lower animals."

It is delightful to trace along minutely so rare, so satisfactory a life, as it tends toward its long-deferred conclusion. When ninety-one years old she resumes her mathematical studies in some new books which had advanced to higher grounds in algebra, and especially in quaternions.

"So now I got exactly what I wanted," she writes, "and I am very busy for a few hours every

morning; delighted to have an occupation so entirely to my mind. I thank God that my intellect is still unimpaired! During the rest of the day I have recourse to Shakspeare, Dante, and more modern light reading, besides the newspapers, which always interested me much. I have resumed my habit of working, and can count the threads of a fine canvas without spectacles. I receive every one who comes to see me, and often have the pleasure of a visit from old friends very unexpectedly. In the evening I read a novel, but my tragic days are over; I prefer a cheerful conversational novel to the sentimental ones. I have recently been reading Walter Scott's novels again, and enjoy the broad Scotch in them. I play a few games of Bézique with one of my daughters for honor and glory, and so our evenings pass pleasantly enough. It is our habit to be separately occupied during the morning, and to spend the rest of the day together."

The next year she writes: "I am now in my ninety-second year, (1872,) still able to drive out for several hours. I am extremely deaf, and my memory of ordinary events, and especially of the names of people, is failing, but not for mathematical or scientific subjects. I am still able to read books on the higher algebra for four or five hours in the morning, and even to solve the problems. Sometimes I find them difficult, but my old obsti-

nacy remains, for if I do not succeed to-day, I attack them again on the morrow. I also enjoy reading about the new discoveries and theories in the scientific world and on all branches of science."

Her last record, in her last year, is worthy of her whole life: "Though far advanced in years, I take as lively an interest as ever in passing events. The Blue Peter has been long flying at my fore-mast, and now that I am in my ninety-second year I must soon expect the signal for sailing. It is a solemn voyage, but it does not disturb my tranquillity. Deeply sensible of my utter unworthiness, and profoundly grateful for the innumerable blessings I have received, I trust in the infinite mercy of my almighty Creator. I have every reason to be thankful that my intellect is still unimpaired; and although my strength is weakness, my daughters support my tottering steps, and, by incessant care and help, make the infirmities of age so light to me that I am perfectly happy."

This enviable happiness, and also this notable longevity, could probably never have been attained but by such persistent, practical life—the habit of working on, which is, in the best sense, living on. Beyond a doubt this was true in respect to the continued integrity of her mental faculties and her enjoyment of life. She enjoyed life in extreme age, because it was filled with befitting occupation;

she kept her faculties in their integrity, because she kept them in habitual exercise. Labor had become a luxury to her, as it does to all faithful workers. She kept it up to the day of her death, and her death itself was enviable. "My mother," writes her daughter, "died in sleep on the morning of November 29, 1872."

The final testimony of her biographer is that her "old age was a thoroughly happy one. She often said that not even in the joyous spring of life had she been more truly happy. Serene and cheerful, full of life and activity, as far as her physical strength permitted, she had none of the infirmities of age, except difficulty in hearing, which prevented her from joining in general conversation. She had always been near-sighted, but could read small print with the greatest ease without glasses, even by lamp-light. To the last, her intellect remained perfectly unclouded; her affection for those she loved, and her sympathy for all living beings, as fervent as ever; nor did her ardent desire for and belief in the ultimate religious and moral improvement of mankind diminish. She always retained her habit of study; and that pursuit in which she had attained such excellence, and which was the most congenial to her—mathematics—delighted and amused her to the end. Her last occupations, continued to the actual day of her death, were the revision and completion of a treatise which she had written years

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before, on the 'Theory of Differences,' (with diagrams exquisitely drawn,) and the study of a book on Quaternions. Though too religious to fear death, she dreaded outliving her intellectual powers; and it was with intense delight that she pursued her intricate calculations after her ninetieth and ninety-first years; she repeatedly told me how she rejoiced to find that she had the same readiness and facility in comprehending and developing these extremely difficult *formulæ*, which she possessed when young. Often, also, she said how grateful she was to the almighty Father who had allowed her to retain her faculties unimpaired to so great an age. God was, indeed, loving and merciful to her; not only did he spare her this calamity, but also the weary trial of long-continued illness. In health of body and vigor of mind, having lived far beyond the usual span of human life, He called her to Himself. For her, death lost all its terrors. Her pure spirit passed away so gently that those around her scarcely perceived when she left them. It was the beautiful and painless close of a noble and a happy life."

Such was one of the most noteworthy lives in the history of the human race. Its rare length alone would entitle it to be so regarded; its rare happiness in old age; its still rarer success in the highest culture; the yet rarer fact of this success being achieved by a woman, render it altogether unique and admirable. But its most noteworthy

fact, because most instructive and consolatory to us all, is that it was achieved, as we have shown, in the ordinary circumstances, amid the pre-occupations and duties of our common life.

That all minds, of average capacity, can equal her success it would be presumptuous to affirm; but some degree of success is within the reach of all who have the resolution to be equally diligent and persistent. Mary Somerville judged herself very frankly, and she never claimed any thing like genius; she claimed nothing more than an unusual degree of "perseverance." If there was any element of what is called genius in her mental constitution, it must have been of a mathematical character. There are scattered through her writings occasional indications of that insight, that prescient perception of truth, which is usually esteemed genius, but which may be largely the result of persistent inquiry and thorough mental discipline. One of the sublimest achievements of science in our age is an illustration of her prophetic faculty in this respect. In 1846 the learned world was startled by the simultaneous announcement, from Adams, of England, and Leverrier, of France, of the demonstration, by mere mathematical calculation, of the existence, size, position in space, and the periodic time, of a hitherto unseen planet, rolling around our system, 3,000,000,000 of miles from the sun. The telescopes of Europe were pointed to the desig-

nated place, and the declaration of the two mathematicians was confirmed. Four years before this discovery Mary Somerville had given, in her "Connection of the Physical Sciences," this ever-memorable sentence: "If after the lapse of years the tables formed from a combination of numerous observations should be still inadequate to represent the motions of Uranus, the discrepancies may reveal the existence, nay, even the mass and orbit, of a body placed beyond the sphere of vision." This suggestion led at least one of the mathematicians —Adams—perhaps both of them, to calculate the orbit of Neptune. But, though this prediction looks like an intimation of genius, Mary Somerville never believed she possessed any such innate power even in mathematics. In her early studies she complains of unusual difficulties and defeats in the simplest calculations. She overcame them only by persevering industry. If she had genius in mathematics, yet it will hardly be claimed for her in other respects; but she was an accomplished naturalist, linguist, *littérateur*, musician, and painter. Her attainments, apart from her knowledge of the abstract sciences, were such as few of her sex have equaled, but they were the results of persistent labor. In these, at least, she is an example for all aspiring minds — a resplendent demonstration of what men and women may achieve in self-culture, though controlled by the ordinary circumstances of

life. None of us should close the review of such a career without an exhilarating sense of the possibilities of his own life, or without the determination that henceforth his aims shall be pitched to a loftier flight than ever before.

The law of our nature is ascendant. We do violence to it, to ourselves, when we fail to advance, to move upward. He who aims at the sun flies higher than he who aims at a tree, says an old proverb. In the education of our mental, as in that of our spiritual, capacities, we are in duty bound to press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling, as beings endowed with powers that are eternally to endure and to expand.

V.

MADAME DE STAËL AND HER GERMANY—WOMAN AND LITERATURE.

MADAME DE STAËL is known to the Anglo-Saxon public chiefly by her two fictions, "Delphine" and "Corinne," and by anecdotal disparagements which Napoleonic partisan writers have assiduously propagated under both Empires. Hence it is that Anglo-Saxon criticism, respecting her (always excepting a few of the highest English authorities) has been almost uniformly detractive. The ordinary critics, apparently, have never read the books which her own countrymen recognize as her greatest works—works which produced a sensation throughout Europe three quarters of a century ago, and which three of the largest Parisian publishing houses of our day continue to issue.* Were we to judge from the usual English and American criticisms, we must suppose her to be an obsolete author; every intelligent Frenchman knows, however, that her books are still as vital in France as those of any other writer of her times; there is no circulating library, no book store, hardly a book stall, where they cannot be found. They

* Charpentier & Cie; Didot, Freres; and Garnier, Freres.

have been issued in "complete editions" (originally in seventeen volumes) at an average of every twenty years since her death; and particular works, which seem to be hardly known to English readers, such as those on Literature and the French Revolution, are frequently re-issued. The greatest authors suffer a sort of displacement by time, but not a loss of worth, or rank; they may be consigned to the cemeteries of the past, but not to oblivion; their writings are still their monuments, and, like those of the Memphian Kings, may be eternal pyramids—out of date, yet never out of recognition. Madame de Staël's works have been peculiarly fortunate; they are neither out of date nor out of recognition as popular books. Her essay on "Literature considered in its Relations to Social Institutions," which Sir James Mackintosh pronounced "a great work, the first attempt, on a bold and extensive scale, to define the philosophy of literature;" her "Considerations on the French Revolution," which, for its broad and profound views of civil polity, if not for its style, is worthy of the pen of Burke, and of which Villemain said that "it is incredible it should have proceeded from the pen of a woman;" and her "Allemagne," which Mackintosh esteemed "the most elaborate and masculine production of the faculties of woman," are the best distinctions of her rank in the intellectual world. These works, together with her Co-

rinne, constitute the third and highest series of her productions. The first series comprises her juvenile tales and her "Letters on Rousseau," the latter being her first published book: in the second, or intermediate class, we would place her political brochures, her "Plea for the Queen," her essays on Fiction and Suicide, her dramas, her treatise on the Passions, her "Ten Years of Exile," and her Delphine. Though this classification is not strictly chronological, it exhibits the intellectual grade of her works. To most ordinary Anglo-Saxon critics, who estimate her by the imperfect translations of her Delphine and Corinne, the claim made for her by French liberal writers and by some high English authorities that she is the greatest of literary women seems ridiculous. If we consider her simply as a Novelist this claim may not be tenable. There are, however, but two writers who can be placed in competition with her in this respect. The French might presume to claim such a pre-eminence for George Sand, the English for George Eliot; but could these women have written the philosophical essay on "Literature," or measured themselves with her in the philosophic statesmanship of the "Considerations on the French Revolution?" Of the latter work Sainte-Beuve, acknowledged to be the foremost of French critics, says that "it marks her completeness, her highest development; it made her the historic and political muse of the

period; she is perfect only from this day; the full influence of her star is only at her tomb. Its posthumous publication was an event. It was the splendid obsequies of its authoress." And he affirms that "the nation should have awarded her the obsequies which it gave to Mirabeau."

Besides her purely literary rank, her claims as an historical character are manifold. She was a great social power; by almost universal consent of contemporary witnesses, her conversational eloquence was unrivaled, and was the wonder of the best circles in nearly all the capitals of Europe. Assuredly we have no record of any other woman who wielded a similar social sway, for as many years, from Paris to St. Petersburg, from London to Rome. Thirdly, she was notable as a philanthropist, and her good deeds in this respect entitle her to a place by the side of Elizabeth Fry or Florence Nightingale. Through all the terrors of the French Revolution she was the most active, of recorded persons, in the rescue of the proscribed; she confronted death itself for this purpose; her Swiss home was, for years, a sort of public asylum for them; she saved more lives from the guillotine than any other known person. Lastly, like many other historic French women, she exercised a remarkable power in the politics of her times. In spite of the Salic traditions of France, women have had there a political influence which they have had

nowhere else; Madame de Staël's power, in this respect, was pre-eminent from her first introduction to society, under the administration of her father, to the year of her death. All these considerations must enter into any just estimate of her rank as an historical personage; and it is simply an undeniable matter of fact that we have no record of any woman, in literary history, who can be compared with her in these respects. The language of one of her eulogists, whom some of our critics have impeached as extravagant, is literally true: that "she was the greatest of literary women, greatest by the events of her life, if not by her literary productions."

A living writer (Demogeat) whose book is recommended by French University Professors as among the best of recent critical works on French Literature, and has passed through seventeen editions,* says: "A woman opened courageously to letters the route of the future; and, without abdicating the spirit of the Revolution, she purified it and ennobled it by a splendid aureole of religion and poetry. Never, perhaps, has the French spirit displayed itself in a manner more complete and more admirable than in the person of Madame de Staël. Endowed with all talents, accessible to all true ideas, to all generous emotions, the friend of liberty, passionate for the elegancies of society and

* *Histoire de la Litterature Francaise.* Paris, 1880.

of arts; ranging over all regions of thought, from the severest considerations of politics and philosophy to the most brilliant spheres of the imagination, she united the most diverse elements, but without confusion and without discord. A harmony full of beauty co-ordinated, with her, all the forces of the mind and the heart. She propagated spiritualism without sacrificing the cause of liberty. The general impression of her works is something moral and beneficent. In all parts of them we feel the intimate union of the good and the beautiful—it is one of the effects of the powerful harmony of this noble genius. She and Chateaubriand inaugurated together the intellectual movement of our epoch. By them the nineteenth century projected its programme." Another living critic* says: "By the power of her faith in the ideal, and of her love for humanity, she has united two epochs which seemed separated by an abyss. The works of Madame de Staël have prepared our epoch; and we can say that she resumes, represents, the nineteenth century as Rousseau does the eighteenth. On the one hand, she knew, in its plenitude, the life of the heart, and on the other, she was directly mingled with the great facts of her age; her soul was, therefore, from the beginning, at the very center of the humanity of her times."

* Horung, Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Geneva. See *Revue Suisse*, 1852.

Such was the woman at whose name not a few critics, who have probably never read her principal works, smile with affected superiority and snap their critical fingers, notwithstanding the highest French literary authorities of her day and since her day, and some of the highest English ones, have affirmed her supremacy among literary women. Though she was one of the most vigorous thinkers and most beautiful, womanly souls, she has often been virtually caricatured as a sort of literary sham, a sentimental Amazon, an obstreperous talker, a "philosopher in petticoats." So rife have been these ungenerous insinuations throughout the English literary world, that it is hardly possible for an Englishman to conceive of her as not in some sense a bizarre, a grotesque character, a pedant, if not, indeed, a species of literary charlatan. No conception of her character could be more false, more contrary to the profound sincerity and integrity of her intellectual nature—to the manliness of her mind, the womanliness of her heart.

There are two decisive tests of this prejudiced judgment. One is her own writings, especially those of her last and best style, as above stated. Who that opens the essay on "Literature," the "Allemagne," or the "French Revolution," and reads but a chapter, does not feel that his self-respect requires him to respect this woman; to admire her as one of the most remarkable of thinkers? The other test is

the spontaneous and enthusiastic interest which the highest minds of her day felt in her writings and conversation. Certainly no woman, in literary history, ever gathered about her a larger or more brilliant circle of intellectual men; and no such men have ever been more fervent in their admiration of such a woman. Who were these men, and how do they compare with the critics of a later day, who disparage her? One of them, who, above all others, enjoyed her intimacy, was Benjamin Constant, an astute statesman and critic, a man of whom George Ticknor said that he had more sarcastic acuteness and wit than any other Frenchman since Voltaire; a man of severest, cynical temperament, who would have been the first to detect and the last to tolerate a literary pretender. But no man ever admired more Madame de Staël. He was proud to be the organ of her political opinions in the French Legislature; he defended her in the public journals; he repelled her enemies with manly disdain; and, crediting her with the highest conversational powers of her day, he claimed for her the merit of being as good a listener as talker. The sober-minded historian, Sismondi, was another of her intimate and life-long associates, and at her death declared that "to no other woman do I owe so much as to her." Augustus Schlegel, one of the highest German critics of his time, lived in daily intercourse with her for fourteen years, and

affirmed that "She was a woman great and magnanimous even in the inmost recesses of her soul," and that he learned from her "how to address successfully the European public" in his writings. Karl Ritter, the noted Berlin professor, always grave, if not severe, in his judgment, said that "She constantly gains by more intimate acquaintance, has rare goodness of heart and a charming simplicity;" that "in the whole course of his life, he had never felt more inspiration" than under her conversation. "Her analysis," he adds, "was so clear, her illustrations so luminous, her positions so crowded with ideas, that I consider her conversation one of the most interesting facts of my life. Her intimate friends are all fascinated by her." Lacretelle, the historian, fairly worshiped her, and wrote, "Nature had denied her beauty, but had given her an enchanting voice and charming eyes, which reflected all the sky of her soul—a sky sometimes stormy. The man who should murmur against her lack of beauty would fall at her feet dazzled by her intellect; she was born an intellectual conqueror." De Gerando, the philosopher, delighted in her conversation and correspondence, and wrote, in the language of Socrates to Anaximandra, "You seem to me destined to become the priestess of moral truth on earth, to show men the sublime path to the beautiful and the good." The veteran Swiss sage, Bonstetten, who knew her from

her childhood, wept at her grave, and wrote: "Ah! I cannot believe that she no longer lives. It seems to me that I must always see her before me. She was a good, a beautiful soul. O my God, when I stand before this tomb, beneath the overhanging trees, I cannot control my throbbing heart!" Barante, the historian of the Dukes of Burgundy, Chateaubriand, Villemain, Faurriel, and indeed nearly all the French intellectual men of her day, excepting the Napoleonists, thus recognized her: not as a literary pretender, but as an unrivaled woman, a colossal mind, a beautiful soul. Now, we may soberly ask, Were these most conspicuous literary men of that age all self-stultified before this woman—this authoress whose pen attempted, under their eyes, the highest tasks, and at whose attempts foreign superficial critics affect a sarcastic smile?

Hostile contemporary opinions of her we know can be cited, especially from Englishmen and Germans; but they cannot stand before the more authentic judgments of her countrymen who knew more intimately both herself and her writings. Her conversation especially was misjudged abroad. French women were conventionally authorized to lead conversation in the salons of the day. They dominated there in even political discussions. They guided, to a considerable extent, public events from these famous social centers. Their power and

demeanor, in this respect, were incomprehensible, if not offensive, to Germans and Englishmen, among whom women had no such conventional privileges. It is natural, if not inevitable, that superior talkers should become leaders in conversation; society concedes this prerogative to them, or forces it upon them. Mackintosh, Sheridan, Coleridge, and Macaulay often turned conversation into monologue, and admiring circles were grateful to them for doing so. It is admitted that Madame de Staël was equal to any of them; our own Ticknor, who knew her well, says that she had no equal in conversational talent in Europe, and nearly all witnesses attest this fact. She may have felt the temptation to use it to excess, though her friends deny the charge; but, *eh bien!* she was a woman; the forbearance accorded to men could not be extended to her, however much she might surpass them. Must there not be sex in intellect? Can great talent and great character be recognized in petticoats and turbans, as well as in frock-coats and stovepipe hats?

The same paltry prejudice has depreciated nearly all her other just claims. Her more than ten-years' struggle against Bonaparte — which, as a simple matter of fact, is one of the most heroic examples in the history of her sex—has been caricatured as the caprice of a woman ambitious for notoriety. It cost her two millions of money—a conceded claim which would have been paid at any moment in

which she would consent to be reconciled to him; it involved her dearest friends in her proscription and exile; it sacrificed not only the pecuniary fortunes, but the careers, of her children, and menaced her with imprisonment in Vincennes—all this for notoriety by a woman who had already a European reputation! There could be no high principle in her patriotic conduct! A patriot, a *man*, thus suffering for the liberties of his country and the rights of mankind, would have been sublime even to the smallest critics; but here the question is about a *woman;* what could her conduct be in such a case but a sort of burlesque? And so of her grievous mental sufferings under this imperial and prolonged persecution. Her anguish is ignoble feebleness; Cicero could grieve, in his letters to Atticus, over his exile, but he was dignified; he was a patriot, a man. Ovid could mourn, broken-hearted, over his, and fill his *Tristia* with very sobs; but is not this gushing Corinne a woman? What could banishment be to her? What the loss of her native city, and, at last, of her entire country? If La Fayette, or any other patriotic man, had suffered similar long banishment, and, dying, had left behind him records like hers, breathing incessant and inappeasable grief about his ostracism and his country, the fact would be intelligible enough and noble enough; no excess of anguish for such a privation could be ignoble in a man, a patriot; but in a woman! To be sure,

she was a somewhat peculiar woman; with a brain which the Parisian anatomists said, after her death, was larger than any they had ever found among women; and she certainly wrote much about her country and politics—one book, at least, which is supposed to be remarkable for its statesmanship, and which it is thought no statesmen of her day could have excelled; and she unquestionably intermeddled continually with practical politics, having much to do with the political fortunes of Talleyrand, Narbonne, Constant, etc., influencing not a little political parties, and corresponding with President Jefferson and other leading Americans, as well as with English statesmen, on the highest political questions; and it is true also that Lamartine called her "the last of the Romans under the French Cæsar, who dared not destroy her, and could not abase her;" and declared that, after the Restoration, the king considered "her an ally to his crown, because she represented the European spirit," and that "her salon, in Paris, was one of the forces of the restoration;" and Guizot found in her writings "the true moral atmosphere of politics, outside of which there is no vital air;" and Sainte-Beuve recognized her as "the founder" of the best modern school of French politics, as represented by the famous journal, "The Globe;" but, after all, we Anglo-Saxons know what qualifications, what abatements, should be given to these very curious facts,

for we know that she was a—woman. Frenchmen, indeed, and some of the greatest of them, continue in our day to assert with preposterous exaggeration her greatness; Edmond Scherer, recognized as among the first of living French critics, while acknowledging her faults, declares that "the history of this woman, at once so masculine and so tender, is unique in literature," and that "never has a mind elevated itself more naturally to the ideal;" and Laboulaye has, foolishly enough, called her "the most remarkable of literary women"—*le plus remarquable des femmes qui ont écrit*—and these men, to be sure, know more about her writings and her epoch than we do; but Anglo-Saxon "common sense" can pronounce on them and their heroine.

Some of her Anglo-Saxon critics have even stooped to imitate the pedagogic criticism of French Napoleonic writers on her style. Verbal criticism could tear to pieces almost any of our classics, from Chaucer to Johnson, from Johnson to Carlyle, and with plausible enough reason regarding the latter writer, as we have admitted. But finical exactness, in this respect, is seldom a characteristic of great writers; it is a characteristic usually of mediocrity or pedantry. Maximus in minimus. Hercules, wielding his club, would disdain the decorated sword of the courtier. "Style is the man," unquestionably; but it is style of

thought rather than of language, however desirable accuracy and elegance may be in the latter. Pretentious amateurs can point out anatomic defects in an arm of Michael Angelo's "Moses;" but they dare not attempt a similar work, and the august statue looks down serenely upon them as they tattle their small, self-complacent criticisms around its pedestal. Intent on the powerful utterance of her thoughts, Madame de Staël, in whose writings it would be difficult to find a single weak passage, was nevertheless often careless of her verbal constructions; they are sometimes involved and obscure. A certain class of writers, who would have been better pedagogues than critics, have found delight in pointing out her defects of this kind, the delight which mosquitoes might take in buzzing about the ears of a lioness. The Napoleonist, Roederer, set the example. He was her early friend, and favored her works and those of her associates, Sismondi, Constant, etc., in Paris journals; and he acknowledges that, in the days of his peril, she was devoted to him, and offered him money and shelter at Coppet. He became a fervent Bonapartist, and was rewarded by his master; was made a Count of the Empire, a Peer of France, embassador, etc. "He was an amateur in literature," says Sainte-Beuve, "a lover of thesis and of paradox." During the rest of his life he ceased not to injure his old friend by "faint praise." Capable of

better things, he became himself the victim of his trivial criticism, his pedantry, and love of paradox. To prove his "thesis" that "Madame de Staël has great talent for writing, but does not know how to write," he laboriously collected from her works a long series of verbal defects, scores of them. He became a member of the Institute, and his class, of party writers, honored him highly. Madame de Staël's writings are, to-day, in every respectable library, in nearly every intelligent family of her country; after his death, Roederer's heirs issued his in eight octavos, but for "limited" circulation; and the curious reader who would look into them will seldom find them except on the shelves of the public libraries, and there usually in uncut leaves. The rights of intellect are indefeasible in spite of many faults—faults which inferior minds are usually eager to notice because they afford some grounds of equality between themselves and the superior objects of their jealousy.

Much of the depreciation of Madame de Staël by the English world must be attributed to Byron's scoffs at her conversation in London, as recorded by Moore; but Byron himself wonderingly admired her intellect and, later, admired her social power; and at last, amid his orgies in Venice, wrote, at her death, a pathetic eulogy on her character. Of course such a man could never wholly surmount his prejudices, but they only enhance the opinion

he gave of her talent, that it surpassed that of any other woman in literary history. The Germans, especially at Weimar, were chafed by the importunity of her conversation, for she was seeking there materials for her "Allemagne;" but they acknowledged her talent, and in the language of Schiller, admitted that "She is all of a piece; there is no false or foreign element in the mixture; one is, therefore, in spite of all differences, completely at ease with her; one can listen to every thing from her and say every thing to her. She represents the acme of French culture—she is the most cultivated, the most *spirituelle*, of women."

The question of her relative position among literary women is not an important one; it may even be said to be trivial; for, not relative, but absolute, worth must finally determine all claims in such a case; and, unfortunately, the restrictions imposed by conventional prejudice on the capabilities of women, have heretofore hardly allowed them to produce any very remarkable works of literary art, or of any other art. But some of the contemporary and later authorities who judged her, pronounced upon her comparative merits as the best expression of their judgment, and have thus provoked no small amount of frivolous criticism; but their judgment has never been reversed, and can never be, by an appeal to the historical facts of the question — and it is, finally, but a simple

question of fact. The opinions of these judges are as relevant as they are interesting. They are not advertising or journalistic recommendations; they are utterances of the representative men of an epoch on an intellectual phenomenon of their times; and intelligent men will always feel interested in such utterances from the leading minds of other times. What would we not give for similar judgments on Shakspeare from the representative intellects of his age, in addition to those we have from Ben Jonson, Milton, and a few others? Any critic who would write honestly, not to say generously, about Madame de Staël, must do so in the spirit of these contemporary writers, her associates; for they are his real authorities; he will doubtless be accused of extravagance, but he need not fear the charge; he will not be more eulogistic than they, for the simple reason that he cannot be. They freely used emphatic epithets, but they used them because they believed them to be legitimate. They knew that this woman was altogether a phenomenal character in the literary history of her sex; to deny this fact would have been ridiculous to them, as it must be to all intelligent readers of her chief works.

Allison considered her "the first of female, and second to few male authors." Jeffrey, of the "Edinburgh Review," pronounced her "the greatest of French writers since the time of Voltaire and

Rousseau." Byron, who met her often in London, where the "Allemagne" was first published, read it with admiration, notwithstanding his cynical opinions of women of literary pretensions. "What the —— shall I say about the 'Germany?'" he writes. "I like it prodigiously. I read her again and again." "She is the first of female writers of this, perhaps of any, age," he remarks in a note to his Bride of Abydos. He writes to Murray: "I do not like Madame de Staël, but, depend upon it, she beats all your natives hollow as an authoress, and I would not say this if I could help it. . . . She is a woman by herself, and has done more than all the rest of them together, intellectually; she ought to have been a man." Vinet, the first of modern Swiss thinkers, devotes a whole volume in his Course of French Literature to her and Chateaubriand as the two literary representatives of their epoch; and from his high theological standpoint generously appreciates her moral influence on her age. Sainte-Beuve regards her as the representative woman of the times of the Revolution and first Empire, and, like Vinet, places her by the side of Chateaubriand, the two chiefs of French literature since the period of Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau; but he admits that she was "richer in ideas than Chateaubriand." We hazard little in affirming that any one of the didactic works of Madame de Staël (her treatises on the

"Passions" and on "Literature," the "Germany," etc.) contains more original and profound ideas than can be gathered from all the writings of Chateaubriand. He was the superior painter, she the superior thinker. He was her only rival—"Under the Consulate and Empire, rivals," says Sainte-Beuve, "but since accorded a common admiration." Chateaubriand's "Genius of Christianity" gave *éclat* to his name; but its importance arose principally from the coincidence of the book with a reaction of the national mind from the materialistic skepticism of the Revolution, a reaction which his work doubtless aided among a limited class, but which proceeded from antecedent causes, and was essentially a tendency of the political reaction of the period. This fortunate coincidence has rendered historical and enduring a work the false erudition and falser logic of which have been redeemed from critical contempt only by its surpassing rhetoric, and its art, never surpassed, in the painting of natural scenes.* The "Genie du Christianism" has no longer any rank among Christian "apologetics." "It is," says Vinet, "too much for a simple poem, too little for an apology; the theologian and the painter mutually embarrass themselves in it; they exchange and confound their arguments." It was a plea for Christianism more

* See Macaulay's rather too severe judgment on the *Genie*, in his Life by Trevelyan.

than for Christianity. It aided Napoleon to restore the mediæval ecclesiasticism of France, but did little for the rational "spiritualism," which alone can be enduring, and of which Madame de Staël was pre-eminently a representative writer. Lacretelle, who passed through all the stages of the Revolution, and was himself a representative, in the Academy and in literature, of Christian spiritualism, says that "Madame de Staël, born in the midst of the philosophic circles of the times, but instructed by a father and a mother always faithful to their religious sentiments, and inclined, by the elevation of her soul as well as the power of her genius, to spiritualism, was the first who made us comprehend the necessity of returning to this high philosophy." In every respect, except as a colorist, her rivalry with Chateaubriand (not to say her supremacy) may be asserted.

Most of her favorable critics esteem the Allemagne as her culminating literary production. Though we place her French Revolution higher, we may take the Allemagne as the best illustration of her varied powers, the best exponent of her literary history and personality.* "It was," says Vinet, "an enterprise of reaction against a triple

* This paper, except the preceding pages, was published before the writer's "Life and Times of Madame de Staël;" its chief facts will be found scattered through the latter work with all necessary marginal verifications, *passim*.

despotism, of a man in politics, a sect in philosophy, and a tradition in literature." "A book," says Lamartine, "through which she has poured and, as it were, filtrated all the resources of her soul, of her imagination, of her religion."

The history of the "Allemagne" is extremely interesting. It was not a temporary book, to be rendered obsolete by time, as its title might seem to imply—no more so than the Germania of Tacitus. It is stamped with genius, and genius is essentially immortal. In our endeavor to trace its history, as best illustrating her own, we must claim the forbearance of the reader, for the task has never before been attempted, so far as we know. It will necessarily be somewhat discursive, as it must extend over much of the period of the long exile of the authoress. The complete history of the book would require us to accompany her in her travels in Germany, where she made her preliminary studies for it, especially at Weimar, with Goëthe, Schiller, and Wieland; to restore the literary *coteries* of her *chateau* at Coppet, on the shore of the Leman, where its pages were discussed by Sismondi, Schlegel, Barante, Bonstetten, Werner, and many other brilliant men, who were among the best thinkers of the period; and, in fine, to reproduce much of the contemporary criticism and literary gossip, and of the correspondence that passed between Coppet, Weimar, the *salon* of Madame Recamier at Paris,

and that of the Countess of Albany (wife of Charles Edward, the British Pretender) in the Casa d'Alfieri at Florence, for these were then the intellectual centers, the literary courts, of Europe, and maintained intimate relations. A more attractive range of literary research could hardly be desired, but we are compelled to confine ourselves to some of its most salient points.

The Allemagne was a result, and also a further provocation, of that remarkable persecution with which Napoleon pursued its writer through her "ten years of exile," a persecution which has hardly had a parallel in literary history, and which at last afforded to the world one of the best examples on record of the triumph of the pen over the scepter and the sword. She had passed through all the stages of the Revolution, from its very inception. She abhorred its excesses, but never abandoned the essential principles of political reform, of popular liberty, which it promulgated, and which, in spite of its atrocities, have rendered it, in the estimation of impartial writers, the epoch of modern history; unless, indeed, we must assume as that epoch the great event which initiated it—the North American Revolution. Though she always insisted that she had no "animal courage," she had superlative moral courage, and faced bravely the worst horrors of the revolutionary terrorism to save her friends, and in some instances her enemies, from

the guillotine. She was dragged through the jeering mobs of the streets of Paris to the tribunal of Robespierre, passed into the Hotel de Ville under an arch of pikes, was struck at on the stairs by one of the mob, and saved from death only by the sword of the *gendarme* who conducted her and averted the blow. She thus came near being the first female victim of the Revolution. On the next day the beautiful Princess de Lamballe became its first feminine sacrifice, amid bloody orgies, which history has hardly dared to record—hewed into pieces, one of her limbs shot from a cannon, and her heart and head borne on the points of sabers through the streets in what has been called "an infernal march." Fleeing to her Swiss home at Coppet, Madame de Staël made her *chateau*, as we have said, an asylum for the proscribed. It was crowded with refugees for some years. No man or woman rescued a greater number of such sufferers. M. de Jacours knew, personally, at least twenty whom she saved from death. No one was more eminently the heroine of the Revolution than she, not excepting Madame Roland. But on coming out of its terrors she affirmed, down to her last hour, the genuine rights of the people, which it had so emphatically asserted and so much abused. When almost every conspicuous literary character remaining in France had compromised with the usurpations of Napoleon, she was still loyal to liberty. When

even her most intimate associates, political as well as literary—Benjamin Constant, Sismondi, Lacretelle, Barante, Chateaubriand—had fallen away, she and her friend, La Fayette, still stood erect for republicanism, and stood almost alone. "Liberty," she wrote to General Moreau, "must always be the noblest idea and force of great souls; we must never disparage it on account of its abuses; if we abandon it we give up the hope of the world."

She would not, because she could not consistently with the instincts of her genius and of her generous heart, compromise with Napoleon. At first she shared the universal enthusiasm of France for the young conqueror of Italy. He professed entire loyalty to the republic. She hailed him as the restorer of order and the protector of freedom. But in conversations with him she detected, as by the intuition of her genius, his ulterior designs. He perceived that he was detected, and tried to win her. Through his brothers, Joseph and Lucien, he made her tempting offers. He proposed even to pay her the debt of the Government for two millions loaned by her father, an honest debt formally acknowledged by the Government, but which he afterward refused to pay, and which she recovered only after his downfall. It was a splendid opportunity for her and her sons; but she never wavered. She could not sacrifice her political principles, for, with her, they were moral con-

victions. She chose rather to wander, a proscribed exile, over Europe through all the years of the imperial reign. Napoleon came to fear this solitary woman of genius more than any royal antagonist on the Continent. He could appreciate her singular intellectual power, though on the island of St. Helena he maliciously attempted to depreciate it; but even there he acknowledged to Las Cases that "she will last." For years he persisted in attempts to conciliate, that is to say, bribe her. His brother Joseph (her cordial friend) was repeatedly used for this purpose; the French prefects at Geneva, instructed by the Minister of Police, frequented Coppet to importune her to recognize him in her writings—to say something, "in the style of Corinne," for him, or for the infant king of Rome; she was assured it would end her exile and restore the fortunes of her family. She said nothing against him in her writings, (nothing directly hostile, at least,) but she would say nothing for him. To have favored him would have been, in her opinion, recreance not only to France, but to the human race.

But though she wrote nothing against him, the tacit opposition of such a character was an insufferable grievance to his egotism; and, then, she was the most eloquent talker in France, and her *salon*, at Coppet or in Paris, was a social and political center, where gathered not only all the higher

elements of the opposition, but the best minds of Paris and the leading diplomatists of Europe. "No one enters her *salon*," said Napoleon, "who does not leave it my opponent." "Coppet is an arsenal furnishing arms against me to all Europe." He could hardly have paid her a higher compliment. She was, in fact, the oracle of the opposition; and her friend, Benjamin Constant, one of the most effective publicists of the day, was, as we have intimated, her representative in the Legislature. At her instance he delivered a speech against the monarchical designs of Napoleon. The evening before he whispered in her ear, "You see your *salon* crowded; if I speak to-morrow it will be deserted. Think again." "It is necessary to follow our convictions," was her only reply. On the next evening, which had been appointed for a special gathering, all her usual guests were absent. They sent apologies, and recoiled before the rising power of the First Consul. Fouché, the head of police, went to her and advised her to "retire into the country, and in a few days all would be appeased." "But on my return," she says, "I found it quite otherwise." She knew, however, that an invincible power remained in her otherwise feeble woman's hand—the pen. She resolved to vindicate by it her claims to social and public recognition. In this time of desertion and of the worst chagrins that a woman can suffer, she composed her essay

on "Literature." It produced an immediate and surprising impression. No woman had ever attempted so elaborate a literary work. "Its success," she says, "entirely restored my position in society; my *salon* was again filled." Without a word for or against Napoleon, it was a plea for liberty as the best basis of literature and all social ameliorations. It asserts the doctrine of the perfectibility of the race. "I adopt this doctrine," she says in her introduction, "with all my faculties. It is the conservative, the redeeming hope of the intellectual world." It was Vico's theory of the philosophy of history better applied; he applied it to monarchy, she to republicanism. Her social triumph was complete; her *salon* was again thronged by the best Parisian society and the diplomatic representatives of Europe; even Napoleon's brothers, Joseph and Lucien, could not be kept away. Napoleon could never forgive her; she had struck at all his hidden designs. He waited and watched for his opportunity of revenge.

Necker, her father, not long afterward published his "Last Views of Politics and Finance." She was with him, at Coppet, at the time, and Napoleon falsely attributed it to her. Necker wished him to be a Washington for France. This would never do. He sent an order to him to let politics alone, and threatened his daughter with banishment. She subsequently ventured furtively back toward the capi-

tal, and hired a house ten leagues from it where her friends again flocked to her. Napoleon was told that she was holding court there, and seized the occasion as a pretext for exiling her. She was informed that a *gendarme* would soon take charge of her and her children. He tortured her with delays. Unable to bear this painful suspense, she recalled, with hope, the image of a friend, the loveliest woman in soul as well as in person then in Europe, of whom the good Duke of Montmorency had said that he "loved her as an angel on earth,"—one whose transcendent beauty produced a sensation in the streets wherever she passed, converged upon her the gaze of public assemblies even when Napoleon himself was speaking, and was excelled only by the grace of her manners and the purity of her heart—a woman who subdued the jealousy of women as well as the passion of men, "invincibly protected by the aureole of virtue which always surrounded her;" whose "presence anywhere was an event, and produced a tumult of admiration, of curiosity, of enthusiasm;" even the common people in public places calling upon her with shouts to rise, that they might pay their homage to beauty in her person; who, when it was known that she was to be a collector for a public charity at St. Roche, found it impossible to make her way, without assistance, through the throng that crowded the aisles, stood upon chairs, hung upon the pillars, mounted even the altars of

the side chapels, and gave twenty thousand francs, more for the sight of her than for the sacred design of the occasion; who enchanted all men that beheld her, yet by her moral fascination compelled them to abandon lower hopes for her coveted esteem and her self-respectful friendship; who declined the proffered hearts of princes, and even the possibility of a throne, that she might maintain the obligations of a marriage of "convenience," made when she was but fifteen years old with a man who was forty-two; and who, when her opulent fortune was lost, and after the Restoration had re-established the factitious distinctions of society, and even in old age and blindness, could still hold spell-bound around her the *élite* society of Paris. "She was," says her niece and biographer, who knew her most intimate life, "devoted, sympathetic, indulgent, self-respectful. You found with her consolation, strength, balm for suffering, guidance in the great resolutions of life; she had a passion for goodness." She was, says another authority, "an incomparable being in all respects. Her charming qualities had something so peculiar that they can never be perfectly described. Only scattered traits of her supreme grace can be given." Napoleon himself was smitten by her charms, and, through Fouché, persecuted her with his importunities to induce her to become a lady of his court, ("*dame de palais;*") but she disliked the man, and declined the brilliant offer. He

seized the first opportunity of involving her in the exile of Madame de Staël, compelling her to leave her family and the charmed circle of her innumerable Parisian friends, and wander obscurely in the southern provinces and Italy for years. It was a remarkable coincidence that in these degenerate times two women, one the most beautiful, the other the most intellectual, in modern history, should appear in the same country, and should be united in an inseparable sisterhood. Through all the remainder of Madame de Staël's life Madame Recamier was her most intimate feminine friend, and consoled her in her last hours.

She now found shelter under her friend's roof at Saint-Brice. But the *gendarme* reached her at last, bringing an order, signed by Napoleon, and requiring her to depart within twenty-four hours. After harassing trials she escaped to Germany, and thus did her great enemy open the way for the production of one of her greatest literary monuments, the "Allemagne," the work which, by a striking coincidence, was to crown her fame in the very year in which the crown was to fall from his head. We are tempted to follow her in its preparatory studies there, but our limits forbid. She observed with the eyes, the insight, of genius every aspect of German life and literature. At Weimar she learned the German language, and astonished and perplexed Goëthe and Schiller by her remarkable conversation,

and her virile intellect so strongly contrasted with the vivacity, the *abandon*, of her womanly heart; for the real problem of her character was the fact that in her were combined the intellect of man with the heart of woman. She remained three months in the little literary court of Weimar, and the grand duchess, Louise, became her life-long correspondent. She traveled over much of Germany, and studied well its higher life in the court of Berlin, where she was received with much distinction. An important event in her life was the friendship she formed, in the Prussian capital, with Augustus Schlegel, one of the greatest of living critics, who thenceforward was a member of her household down to the year of her death.

The death of Necker recalled her, heart-broken, to Coppet, where her health gave way. Proscribed in France, she sought relief in Italy, accompanied by her children, Schlegel, and, part of the time, by Sismondi. Genius alone knows the philosopher's stone that turns every thing to gold; her travels in Italy produced "Corinne." On her return she ventured again, clandestinely, to within some leagues of Paris, to publish it. The prefect of the *Seine-Inferieur* was afterward dismissed for treating her with courtesy. But her intellect was again to triumph. Suddenly there broke in upon her almost utter solitude the burst of enthusiasm with which Europe hailed the appearance of "Corinne." "It

was one of the greatest events of the epoch," says Vinet. "It carried all suffrages," says the *Biographie Universelle*. "There was but one voice, one cry of admiration in lettered Europe, at its appearance," says her cousin, Madame Necker de Saussure. Napoleon, whose egotism was as petulant as his ambition was great, was mortified by this success. The official journals attacked the book, and Villemain says that Napoleon himself wrote the hostile criticism of the *Moniteur*. But neither his scepter nor his pen could touch the indefeasible honors of her genius. She stood out before all Europe crowned, like her own Corinne, on the capital of the world. But he could still annoy and oppress her, and he now resumed his persecutions of not only herself, but of her dearest friends, with incredible minuteness, cruelty, and perseverance. He renewed her exile. She went to Coppet, where a court of the best minds of Europe gathered about her; and then again to Germany, to resume her preparations for the Allemagne; to Weimar, to Berlin, to Vienna, accompanied by Schlegel, Sismondi, and Constant. Her progress was an ovation; but the Germans hardly knew what to think of her. With their views of woman, so different from those which Tacitus attributed to their ancestors, they were disposed at first to wonder at her, then to be equivocally sarcastic, but at last to both wonder and admire. They could never, however, entirely sur-

mount their first opinion, that there must be something inadmissible in such high intellectual claims on the part of a woman, and she a French woman. Her books, indeed, surprised them, and her conversation fairly dazzled their slower wits; but she was so subtle, so oracular! The Pythoness might belong to classic Greece, but could not come out of France.

The American scholar, George Ticknor, met at Berlin, some thirty years later, the old prime-minister, Ancillon, who told him a characteristic anecdote of her visit to that city. He said: "When she was here she excited a great sensation, and had the men of letters trotted up and down, as it were, before her successively, to see their paces. I was present when Fichte's turn came. After talking a little while she said, 'Now, Monsieur Fichte, will you be so kind as to give me, in fifteen minutes or so, a sort of idea, or *apercu*, of your system, so that I may know clearly what you mean by your *ich*, (I,) your *moi*, (me,) for I am entirely in the dark about it?' The notion of explaining in a little quarter of an hour, to a person in total darkness, a system which he had been all his lifetime in developing from a single principle within himself, and spinning, as it were, from his own bowels, till its web embraced the whole universe, was quite shocking to the philosopher's dignity. However, being much pressed, he began, in rather bad French, to do the best he

could. But he had not gone on more than ten minutes before Madame de Staël, who had followed him with the greatest attention, interrupted him with a countenance full of eagerness and satisfaction: 'Ah! it is sufficient—I comprehend—I comprehend you perfectly, Monsieur Fichte: your system is perfectly illustrated by a story in Baron Munchausen's travels.' Fichte looked like a tragedy; the faces of the rest of the company like a *comedie larmoyante*. Madame de Staël heeded neither, but went on: 'For, when he arrived once on the banks of a vast river, where there was neither bridge nor ferry, nor even a poor boat or raft, he was at first quite confounded, quite in despair, until, at last, his wits coming to his assistance, he took a good hold of his own sleeve, and jumped himself over to the other side. Now, Monsieur Fitche, this, I take it, is just what you have done with your *ich*, your *moi*, is it not?' There was so much truth in this, and so much *esprit*, that, of course, the effect was irresistible on all but poor Fichte himself. As for him, he never forgave Madame de Staël, who certainly, however, had no malicious purpose of offending him, and who, in fact, praised him and his *ich* most abundantly in her *De l'Allemagne*."

In June, 1808, she was again at Coppet, working on the Allemagne. Baron von Vogt, a man of intellect, was there assisting her by his conversations;

Sismondi was there, preparing the fifth volume of his *Italian Republics;* Schlegel was there, busy in the preparation of his Lectures on Dramatic Art for publication at Heidelberg; Constant was there, preparing his Wallenstein for the press. Matthieu de Montmorency spent some time there, and no man was more welcome. Etienne Dumont, the associate of Mirabeau, (some of whose best speeches he composed,) afterward the friend and editor of Jeremy Bentham, was there, casually at least. Madame Recamier cheered her friend by frequent letters, and by the promise of a visit and of her company in another journey to Vienna. Letters passed often between Weimar and Coppet; the Duchess Louise, esteemed, since the battle of Jena, with Napoleon's own acknowledgment, as one of the great characters of the times, kept up her correspondence with the authoress, and the marble bust of the latter, by Tieck, was honored with a place in the palace of Weimar. The Allemagne was under incessant discussion in the conversations and correspondence of the *chateau.* Three years (1808, 1809, and 1810) were devoted to its composition, six years in all to its preparation. Sismondi, writing to the Countess of Albany, (September 6, 1809,) says: "She has completed about a quarter of the work; but that which is written appears to me superior to any thing that we have yet had from her pen. It is not like 'Corinne,' the frame

of a romance in which observations on national character are presented; she treats directly her subject, and handles it with a force that no one would expect in a woman. There is a truly admirable depth in its judgments of national traits, in its intellectual pictures, etc. Nothing so new, so impartial, and so penetrating has yet been written, I think, on the character of any nation." "This, doubtless, will be her best work," wrote Baron von Vogt to Madame Recamier.

When it was completed she again entered France to publish it, but kept at the prescribed distance of forty leagues from the capital. She obtained the necessary authorization of the Censorship, after the elimination of a few sentences. Her preference of Goethe's "Iphigenia" over that of Racine had to be qualified, and, among other suppressions, was that of a passage in which she described Germany, deprived of liberty, as a temple which fails of columns and roof. When it was printed, Napoleon changed his mind; the French had conquered Germany, but he was not mentioned in the book. The ten thousand printed copies were cut into pieces, and converted into pasteboard, and she was ordered to leave France immediately. A hint was given her, by the Minister of Police, of imprisonment in Vincennes, where the Duc d'Enghien had been murdered by her persecutor. "Ah, my God!" she wrote to Madame Recamier, "I am the Orestes

of Exile, and fate pursues me!" She was in despair, but was inflexible. The police demanded her manuscript, for they wished to destroy the book utterly; but her son escaped with the precious original, and an imperfect copy was given them. She took refuge again in her *chateau* at Coppet, and dreary months of anxiety were spent there, though she was soon surrounded by faithful friends, the *élite* minds of the age. All continental Europe, except Russia, was now controlled by Napoleon. His Swiss *gendarmes* demanded again her manuscript, but she would not surrender it. Her sons, as well as herself, were not allowed to re-enter France, and her home was under the surveillance of police spies. She was not permitted to travel, even in Switzerland, except between Coppet and Geneva. Schlegel was torn from her household and exiled; the Duke of Montmorency visited her, and was exiled; Madame Recamier, who, against her remonstrances, spent a night under her roof on her way to the baths of Aix, was exiled, and could never again return to Paris till the downfall of the tyrant.

These painful details can be tedious to no man of letters, to no woman of heart. With similar facts before, and worse ones afterward, for which we have not room, they present a spectacle for the contemplation of the intellectual world—of, at least, all students of human nature: the little, great man of empire pursuing, with minutest inhumanity and

egotism, a helpless woman of genius—helpless, yet greatest of her age, if not of any age. Great enough to conquer Europe, this man was not great enough to conquer himself. He was conquered by his own pettiest passions; and the truest function of history regarding him is to hold him forth before all eyes with the admonitory lesson that there is no real greatness of genius without the moral greatness of the heart.* After breaking down the whole political fabric of the continent for his own glory and that of his family; after sacrificing millions of French and other lives to his selfish ambition, he was to be cast out of Europe as an unendurable political nuisance; his restored dynasty was again to corrupt France till it should dissolve in official rottenness, and the bravest, most brilliant nation of modern times be overrun by foreign troops and trodden in the dust with a humiliation unparalleled in the history of nations. The bewildered world still cries "Hosanna!" to the memory of Napoleon; but in the coming ages of better light and juster sentiments, when the glory of war shall be rightly estimated as barbarism, which shall stand out worthiest and brightest in the recognition of mankind, the genius of the great military tyrant or that

* "When Bonaparte insisted that the heart is one of the entrails, that it is the pit of the stomach that moves the world—do we thank him for the gracious instruction? Our disgust is the protest of human nature against a lie."—*Emerson.*

of the great suffering writer? Which alternative will enlightened France then choose for her homage, her greatest man of blood or her greatest woman of intellect? There are men who will brush aside such reflections as merely rhetorical, but destiny itself will reinstate them. Alluding to her sufferings Madame de Staël says: "It may, perhaps, excite astonishment that I compare exile to death, but great men of antiquity and of modern times have sunk under it. Many a man has confronted the scaffold with more courage than he has been able to command in the loss of his country. In all codes of law perpetual banishment has been considered as one of the severest penalties; but here the caprice of one man inflicts, in a kind of sport, what conscientious judges have pronounced with regret on criminals." But her wrongs were yet to be adjudicated by "conscientious judges." The conscience of the world is always right in its ultimate judgments, and wisdom and virtue have only need to wait. Emerson says: "Culture alters the political *status* of an individual. It raises a rival royalty in a monarchy. It is king against king. It is ever the romance of history in all dynasties. It creates a personal independence which the monarch cannot look down, and to which he must often succumb. The history of Greece is at one time reduced to two persons, Philip, or the successor of Philip, on one side, and Demosthenes, a private

citizen, on the other. Kings feel that this is what they themselves represent. This is no red-kerchiefed, red-shirted rebellion, but royalty—kingship. This is real kingship, and theirs only titular. Literary history and all history is a record of the power of minorities and of minorities of one."

Ever since the epoch of the Revolution France has been reeling between the alternatives of the personal government, exemplified by Bonaparte, and the constitutional liberty for which her greatest authoress pleaded and suffered. Destiny will infallibly decide at last for the latter; no other final decision is possible under the moral laws of the universe.

Madame de Staël dreaded imprisonment with a morbid terror. It might be for life. She would flee, but whither? She would escape to England or America, and had invested funds in the latter for the purpose; but Napoleon controlled all the ports, except those of Russia, and he was about to invade that country. Taking with her the Allemagne, she left secretly, with her children and her second husband, Rocca. Schlegel joined them at Berne, and they hastened through Germany, through Austria, through Poland. Rocca disguised himself as a French courier, for, though he had resigned as a French officer, and was disabled by his honorable wounds, Napoleon tried to tear him from her by reclaiming him for the army. Descriptions of his

person were distributed along their route. They read placards at the police stations every-where for their detection or obstruction. The events of their flight were, indeed, thrilling, but we cannot delay for them. Fleeing before the nearly half-million hosts of the conqueror, they at last enter Russia with thankful hearts; but the French army is between them and St. Petersburgh; they hasten to Moscow, but the invaders march thitherward—to their doom, indeed—but the exiles could not have anticipated that doom. They flee again, and by a wide detour reach the northern capital, where the Emperor Alexander receives them gladly. They reach the capital of Sweden, and are sheltered by her faithful friend, Bernadotte, the ally of the Czar. They at last reach London and are safe, and the Allemagne is saved to the intellectual world forever.

England knows little or nothing yet of the proscribed book, but the genius of its author is known there by her other works; she is recognized as the most distinguished woman in literature, and her persecutions by Napoleon command for her enthusiastic sympathy. She is immediately the idol of its best circles; and such is the eagerness to see her that "the ordinary restraints of high society," we are told, are quite disregarded; at the houses of cabinet ministers the first ladies of the kingdom mount chairs and tables to catch a glimpse of her.

She dines daily with statesmen, authors, and artists, at the tables of Lords Landsdowne, Holland, Grey, Jersey, Harrowby, and surpasses all by her splendid conversation, not excepting Sheridan, Mackintosh, Erskine, and Byron.

The interest excited by her social qualities, her literary fame, and her persecutions, was suddenly and immeasurably enhanced by the publication of her Germany, in London, in the autumn of 1813. It proved to the sober, practical English mind that the dazzling talker was also a profound thinker. No work from a feminine hand had ever equaled it in masculine vigor and depth of thought, as well as of sentiment.

We have seen how the precious manuscript escaped the hands of the Government at Paris by the forethought of her son, and afterward by her own evasion of the police at Coppet. Secretly carried through all her flight over Germany, Poland, Russia, the Baltic Sea, and Sweden, it was now secured to the world by the press of England, and all intelligent Frenchmen have ever since been proud of it as one of the monuments of their national literature. In her preface she told the British public the story of its misfortunes, inserting the insulting letter of the Duke de Rovigo, the Minister of Police, ordering her out of France. "At the moment," she said, "when this work was about to appear, and when ten thousand copies had

already been printed, the Minister of Police, known by the name of General Savary, sent his *gendarmes* to the publisher, with orders to cut in pieces the whole edition. Sentinels were stationed at the different issues of the building to prevent the escaape of a single copy of so dangerous a book. A commissioner of police was charged to superintend this expedition. General Savary obtained an easy victory, but the poor commissioner died, I am told, from anxious labors to make sure, in detail, of the destruction of so many volumes, or, rather, of their transformation into pasteboard, perfectly white, upon which no trace of human reason should remain. The intrinsic value of this card-paper, estimated at twenty *louis*, was the only indemnity that the publisher obtained.* At the moment my book was destroyed at Paris, I received an order, in the country, to surrender the copy from which it had been printed, and to leave France in twenty-four hours." Such a statement could not but excite the wonder of England. Such a petty, persecuting policy on the part of Napoleon was inconceivable to the British mind, accustomed to the utmost liberty of thought and speech, and almost as unrestricted liberty of the press. The incredible history of the work now gave it incredible success.

She appended to her preface a brief outline of its design and plan. "I have thought," she said,

* She, however, sent the publisher 15,000 francs.

"that it would be beneficial to make known the country of Europe where study and meditation have been carried so far that we may consider it the land of thought. The reflections which the country and its books have suggested to me may be divided into four sections. The first will treat of Germany and the Manners of the Germans; the second of Literature and Art; the third of Philosophy and Morals; the fourth of Religion and Enthusiasm."

The Allemagne could not, like Delphine and Corinne, appeal to popular readers, the readers of "light literature;" but it commanded immediately and universally the interest of the enlightened classes. We have noticed how Byron admired it in spite of his cynical dislike of her conversation and her person. Mackintosh immediately reviewed it in the Edinburgh Quarterly. "The voice of Europe," he said, "has already applauded the genius of a national painter in the author of 'Corinne.' But it was there aided by the power of a pathetic fiction, by the vanity and opposition of national character, and by the charm of a country which unites beauty to renown. In the work before us she has thrown off the aid of fiction. She delineates a less poetical character, and a country more interesting by expectation than by recollection. But it is not the less certain that it is the most vigorous effort of her genius, and probably

the most elaborate and masculine production of the faculties of woman." The chapters which treat of society and conversation, he remarks, are the most perfect, and "exhibit an unparalleled union of graceful vivacity with philosophical ingenuity." The chapter on Taste, he says, is "exquisite," "balancing with a skillful and impartial hand the literary opinions of nations." The third part, which treats of Metaphysical Systems, is, he adds, "a novelty in the history of the human mind, and, whatever may be thought of its success in some of the parts, must be regarded, on the whole, as the boldest effort of the female intellect." The concluding portion of the work, on Enthusiasm, he pronounces the most eloquent, "if we except the incomparable chapter on Conjugal Love." "Thus," he says, after a long citation, "terminates a work which, for variety of knowledge, flexibility of power, elevation of view, and comprehension of mind, is unequaled among the works of women, and which, in the union of the graces of society and literature with the genius of philosophy, is not surpassed by many among those of men."

The London edition was issued by Murray in three volumes, 12mo. In the following year it was reproduced in Paris and Geneva, and in an Italian version at Milan. In the next year another edition appeared in Paris, in four volumes, 12mo, and in three volumes, 8vo. In less than two years later

a revised edition was issued in Paris in two volumes, 8vo. Editions and translations followed in all the principal tongues of Europe.

So imposing a work could not fail to provoke criticism, and, besides innumerable "periodical" reviews, no less than six publications, discussing its merits and demerits, appeared in less than a year in the German, French, and English languages, from the presses of Heidelberg, Hanover, Bremen, Paris, London, and Edinburgh.

It is from the stand-point of the Romantic School that Madame de Staël considers Germany. The two Schlegels, Ludwig Tieck, Goerres, Brentano, Arnim, Kleist, were then the representatives of that school, and Goethe was hailed as their chieftain, though the universality of his genius rendered him superior to the limitations of any literary sect. These writers endeavored to be national by reproducing exclusively the spirit of the elder German literature and legends—the idiosyncrasies of the northern mind. They succeeded to some extent, in spite of the claims of culture on all the possibilities of literature and art. Madame de Staël wrote under their inspiration, and thereby painted a more genuine picture of intellectual and social Germany than she could otherwise have produced. An able German critic remarks that it is important her readers should bear in mind this stand-point of her "remarkable work." She took

it spontaneously, though influenced by her favorite German authors; her previous work on "Literature" showed her predilection for the Romantic School; it is pervaded by the ideas of that school, and she was among the first of its founders in France. She gives in the Allemagne a fine chapter discriminating the two schools. She says: "The songs of the Troubadours, born of chivalry and Christianity, originated in the poetry of the Romantic School. If we do not admit that paganism and Christianity, the north and the south, antiquity and the Middle Ages, chivalry and the Greek and Roman institutions, divide the empire of literature, we shall never be able to judge, from a philosophic stand-point, ancient and modern taste. Classic poetry is simple and salient, like exterior objects; Christian poetry has need of all the colors of the rainbow. But the question for us is not between the classic and romantic poetry, but between the imitation of the one and the inspiration of the other. The literature of the ancients is with the moderns a literature transplanted; the romantic literature is with us indigenous; it is the product of our religion and our institutions."

The fact that she was the principal founder of the romantic school in French literature shows the salient energy of her genius. Romanticism is legitimate in its own sphere. Its chief fault was its

exclusiveness; for the capabilities of art are as manifold as the needs of culture. While vindicating the romantic school, Madame de Staël did not exclude classicism. The partisan spirit provoked by its theorists was irrelevant. Lerminier remarks that "one party repeated, with Madame de Staël and the Schlegels, that romanticism came forth from Christianity and chivalry; another, with some English critics and poets, that its origin was in Saxon and Norman traditions. There were still others, more refined, more metaphysical, who saw in romanticism the expression of the most profound sentiments of the soul, and an indefinable ideal. There was a resonant shock of systems and theories." Romanticism, which produced, besides Madame de Staël, such writers as Chateaubriand and Lamartine, and has culminated in our day in the genius of Victor Hugo, has enriched the literature of the modern, without impairing the literary claims of the ancient world. Lerminier affirms a truth, though not without a spice of malice, when he says that "Hugo, wishing to establish his title as chief of the romantic school, its Aristotle, has appropriated the ideas long since put in circulation by Madame de Staël, the Schlegels, Sismondi, and Benjamin Constant, and thrust them to an extreme." The romantic school has seen the end of its day as an exclusive sect; it will never see the end of its day as a legitimate and brilliant school

by the side of classicism. It is as legitimate there as the Gothic architecture is by the side of the Greek.

Considered as the initiative of foreign criticism on German literature, Sainte-Beuve esteems the Allemagne a work which "no other person could have produced at that period." Madame de Staël was the first writer who effectively disclosed, not only to France, but to Europe generally, the rich mines of the German intellect. She was the first of French writers to vindicate Shakspeare against the prejudices of Voltaire. Villemain says: "The unity of such a work is in the soul of the author, in the spirit, the *verve*, continuous, yet ever varied, with which she treats of so many and such diverse topics. We admire the penetrating glance which it casts on all the literature of a nation, its profound intelligence, the vivid sensibility which gives to the analysis all the interest of passion and all the novelty of inspiration. The poetry of the north, with what vivacity Madame de Staël reproduces and interprets it! . . . This book, this enthusiasm of literary independence, this apotheosis of duty, this ardor of spiritualism, were in reality an indirect and continual protestation against the system of government which then dominated France. . . . The work of Madame de Staël, all animated with a sort of moral independence, breathing hatred of personal interest, enthusiasm

for noble sacrifice, for liberty, the liberty of the soul subjected to the single law of duty, shocked the political maxims of the conqueror. The passion which reigns in the book, and which animates it with a single spirit in all the diversity of its subjects and forms—it is moral sentiment."

Lamartine speaks of the Allemagne with all his poetic ardor. We have seen in part his opinion. He adds: "Appearing about the same time in England and France, it became the subject of the conversation of Europe. Her style, without losing any of its youthful vigor and splendor, seemed now to be illuminated with lights more high and eternal, as she approached the evening of life and the diviner mysteries of thought. This style paints no more, it chants no more, it adores. One respires the incense of a soul over its pages. It is Corinne become a priestess, and seeing from the border of life the unknown God beyond the horizons of humanity."

Vinet says: "Its appreciations of authors and of works are spirited and delicate, and show rare penetration; its analyses are full of movement and life, and the cited passages are translated with great talent. Respect for genius and the sentiment of the beautiful illuminate every step of the writer. French prejudice nowhere makes her misapprehend true beauties; nor does her enthusiasm, or docility, or contempt for mere novelty, ever lead her, as so

many others, to mistake a deformed idol for a divinity."

Vinet, like Sainte-Beuve, claims for the work a high moral and political purport. He says: "It was one of those life-boats which, in the stress of the storm, is employed courageously for the salvation of a ship in distress. The ship was France, all the liberties of which were, in the opinion of Madame de Staël, perishing at the time. Persuaded that the nations are called to help one another, she went this time to demand from Germany—humiliated and conquered Germany—the salvation of France. There is more of patriotism than of national egotism in the work. . . . It inaugurated in literature a new era. For good or for evil its influence was capital. It put an end to the isolation of two great neighboring nations. It revealed for the first time Germany to France. All Germany does not appreciate this fact; but hear what Goethe wrote in his old age: 'This book,' he said, 'ought to be considered as a powerful engine which made a wide breach in the wall of antiquated prejudice which divided the two countries; so that beyond the Rhine, and afterward beyond the channel, we became better known—a fact that could not fail to procure for us a great influence over all western Europe.'" Vinet thinks that the Allemagne marks the point of maturity of thought and of talent in Madame de Staël; that in style it is the

richest, and in moral sentiment the most advanced, of all her works. "It is," he says, "in the Allemagne, if I am not deceived, and particularly in its last part, that she shows herself, above all, a poet. In approaching the regions of supreme truth, and, by consequence, of repose, she has felt commence in her soul that harmonious concert of sensibility and imagination which is properly poetry. Without making use, as in Corinne, of poetical phraseology, without deviating from the movement of prose, she sings, perhaps for the first time." Richter criticised the Allemagne, particularly what it said of his own writings, but he admired the genius of its author, and said, "Probably she is the only woman in Europe, and still more probably the only French person, that could have written such a book."

The Allemagne, as Goethe admits, breached the wall that had barricaded the German literature. It did so for England as well as for France, and finally for the whole exterior intellectual world. Some twenty years earlier Scott, influenced chiefly by Lewis, (author of the "Monk," and a thorough German scholar,) had given intimations of the wealth of German thought, and made some translations from Burger, and, later, from Goethe, but lost money by their publication. Thirteen years before the appearance of the Allemagne Coleridge published his translation of Schiller's

"Wallenstein," and began to talk German philosophy among his friends; but Englishmen continued to think the language inexorable, if not barbarous, and the originality of the German mind fantastic, and incompatible with British "common sense." The Allemagne dispelled this prejudice, and, revealing the abundant treasures of German genius and learning, opened the way for that influx of German thought which, principally by the subsequent labors of Coleridge and Carlyle, has, for good or evil, been flooding the English mind, and transforming English scholarship, criticism, and speculation.

It was its author's good fortune to write it at a time when the German intellect was at its zenith, culminating in Goethe, and illustrated by a splendid array of other lights—by Klopstock, Schiller, Wieland, Winkelman, Lessing, Herder, Tieck, Richter, the Schlegels, Werner, Wolf, Jacobi, Kant, Fichte, Schelling,* and almost innumerable others, most of them still living when she last visited Germany. The enduring products of the German mind have since multiplied vastly in every department, but its splendor at the epoch of the Allemagne has never been surpassed, and prob-

* Hegel, whose later influence on German thought was so important, is not mentioned by her, though he began his first lectures at Jena, near Weimar, in 1801, two years before her arrival in Weimar, and published his work on Schelling in the same year, and his "Phenomenology of the Soul" in 1807.

ably never can be. Yet the book has, by the course of time alone, become deficient, but not obsolete, and never can be, as a survey of German life and literature. It abounds also in special faults; its critical estimates are sometimes inadequate, at others exaggerated. But works of genius, as we have affirmed, are essentially immortal. It is the distinction of genius that it imparts somewhat of its own personality to its productions. "Style is the man;" and style, of both thought and expression—the individuality of the artist—is the everlasting charm of classic works. The touch of genius thus gives enduring life to even obsolete facts. It is like the word of the prophet in the "valley of visions;" the dry bones rise up at its bidding, embodied and armed. The fragments of the Parthenon sculptures are precious, not because of their mythologic fictions, but because, in their very ruins, they still glow with the genius of Phidias. The Allemagne is imbued with the richest genius of its author—with exalted sentiment, with profound thought, with grand moral truth, with the eloquence of style, with the power, the essence, of a great soul. There is scarcely a page of it which does not present something that the world can never willingly let die. As a monument of intellect, especially of a woman's intellect, it is classic and immortal.

It would betray an unpardonable lack of sensi-

bility were we to feel no profounder sentiment than mere satisfaction with this signal literary triumph. In its peculiar circumstances it is a spectacle for generous, for enthusiastic admiration. It is a vindication of the supremacy of the human intel lect, of that sovereignty of mind which, from the prisons of Boethius, Tasso, Cervantes, and Bunyan, from the exile of Ovid, Dante, and Spinoza, and from the humiliation of the old age and poverty of Milton, have sent forth through all the world and all time proofs, if not of the invulnerability, yet of the invincibility, of genius, irradiating their names with honor when the sword or the scepter which oppressed them has sunk into oblivion or ignominy. Throughout her prolonged sufferings the intellect of this persecuted woman has been ever in the ascendant. Its every new production has been superior to its preceding one. The victory of the pen over the scepter was now, in her case, incontestable. Corinne was crowned anew, in the land of constitutional liberty, with laurels gathered in "the land of thought." Meanwhile the crown was falling from the brow of her heartless persecutor. She had fled over Europe with her proscribed manuscript, before his armed hosts. He knew that she was fleeing in his front, as we have seen by his attempts to embarrass her flight and to seize Rocca. His hosts have been rolled back in disastrous overthrow from the ruins of the ancient cap-

ital of the land which then gave her shelter, leaving in their retreat more that 250,000 dead men, victims of the sword or the climate. His unparalleled energies rallied again, and he triumphed at Lutzen, at Bautzen, at Dresden. But in the very month in which the Allemagne issued from the London press was fought the great "battle of the nations," as it has been called. Germany, united, rose with overwhelming resentment, and, on the battle-field of Leipsic, broke forever the domination of the tyrant. The Edinburgh Quarterly appeared, with Mackintosh's review of the Allemagne, amid the acclamations of England over the great victory—the resurrection of the people whose intellectual claims it had vindicated. In less than six months Napoleon abdicated, and the authoress, now the most distinguished woman of Europe, re-entered the French capital. Her Corinne had been the apotheosis of Italy; her Allemagne, delayed by her persecutor till the resurrection of Germany and his own downfall, was now her own apotheosis.

A battle was fought on the 30th of March, 1814, under the walls of Paris, and the allies entered the city. Madame de Staël's re-appearance there was another social triumph. Her *salon* was again opened and thronged. Her friends returned; Montmorency and Chateaubriand to take office, and Madame Recamier, from her exile in Italy, to em-

bellish the society of the capital with her undiminished beauty. The Government paid to the authoress the two millions of Necker's claim. She saw her daughter married to the Duc de Broglie, and placed in the highest ranks of French society. Her fame filled Europe; no queen had more. She had been faithful, and had triumphed at last. The "Hundred Days" threatened that triumph, but Waterloo secured it.

The world knows well the remainder of the remarkable story. The persecutor—the greatest captain of his age, if not of any age—died, himself an exile on the rock of St. Helena; his victim—the greatest feminine writer of her age, if not of any age—became the idol of his lost capital, the intellectual empress of Europe, and died peacefully in her restored Parisian home—La Fayette, Wellington, royal personages from the Tuileries, the representatives of all European Courts, inquiring daily at her door, and the world feeling that by her death, in the language of Chateaubriand, "society was struck with a general disaster;" that "it made one of those breaches which the fall of a superior intellect produces once in an age, and which can never be closed."

The history of such a woman teaches its own lessons more effectively than could any dissertation, or preachments of her eulogists. She vindicates the highest claims of her sex, for emancipation and

fair play in the life of humanity. In spite of all superficial and supercilious criticism, she takes her place, without pretension, but invincibly, among the elect minds of history, though she was never allowed, in that place, the free action and sway which would have been permitted to a man with half her capability. She harmonized her literary, and other public, activity with rare filial devotion, and the faithful education of her children, for she was a genuine woman as well as a virile intellect; and, if the impeachments which the gossip and scandal of the day alleged against her, as against nearly every other woman of her class, should ever be confirmed, yet her whole history shows that she possessed a profound *morale* which never yielded to the corrupt "philosophy" of her times; which ever craved the happiness of pure relations; and which, especially after the death of her father, developed, more and more, into high religious aspirations; and she died, at last, sustained by her Christian faith, in peace with God and all the world.

In the language of the most brilliant of living lecturers in the University of France:* "This woman, contemporaneous with what was most solemn and most tragic, most heroic and most terrible, in French national history, presents herself, before our minds, at Coppet, in her splendors and her sorrows. With a passionate imagination, the inspira-

* Prof. Caro, *La Fin du Dix-Huitieme Siecle.* Paris, 1880.

tion and highest movement of genius, energetic eloquence, and enthusiastic will, Madame de Staël had some of those qualities, some also of those brilliant faults, which assure, in this world, the triumphs of *élite* minds. Her powerful faculties would have placed a man in the first ranks: a woman, she had to use in ungrateful struggles and in secondary *roles*, those qualities which designate her to great *roles* in the State. Born for action, she had to consume her forces in resistance. The criticism of the salon, political opposition in conversation, by allusions, and by epigrams—what a mediocre and sterile *role!* If she had been a man, though her principles, her instincts, or her ambition, might have separated her from the Government, yet she could, at least, have warred, face to face, in full day, by public discourse or by acts; she could have acted directly on her country; she could have organized resistance and disciplined it according to the law of her idea or her passion. There would have been, in such a combat, vivid joys, compensations of popularity, great satisfaction of self-esteem; and, if events should become propitious, what nobler pleasure than the exercise of power, the realization of her ideas, the impression of her thoughts on the history of her times! But a woman, enslaved in the circle that opinion and nature traced around her, she could not fashion events and reveal herself in public acts. Her compressed powers

changed their route; discovering no issue in action, they sought it elsewhere; they burst forth in her works. Her faculties, applied to thought, redoubled its energy and movement. Her Corinne, Allemagne, and French Revolution consecrated her name, before Europe, in Romance, in Esthetics, in the Criticism of comparative Literature, and in the analysis and theory of Politics."

This will be called enthusiasm, French enthusiasm; but it is legitimate enthusiasm; and it should be consoling to all men and women of letters, to know that, through the more than half-century during which this remarkable woman has been belittled and bespattered by a certain class of writers, she has been thus enthusiastically upheld by men in the highest literary positions of her country—such as Villemain, Chateaubriand, Sainte-Beuve, Lamartine, Guizot, Scherer, Laboulaye, and Caro; men who, while admitting her faults, have delighted to eulogize her powers as seldom or never equaled among women. To contemplate such a character without somewhat of the enthusiasm which so much inspired her writing and her life, and of which she so eloquently treats in the last two chapters of her Allemagne, as essential to all true art and all high character, would be incompatible with the subject. It would be a violation of the just principles of criticism, of the canons of true taste, as applicable to such a case.

Carlyle, in his notable paper on Burns, declines to accept the doctrine that "criticism should be a cold business;" where it has to do with a heart as well as with a head, as in this case, it should be from the heart as well as from the head. Its "coldness" here would be an impertinence, not to say a profanation.

VI.

VOLTAIRE—LITERARY POWER.

MORLEY'S book on Voltaire is a brilliant essay notwithstanding his formidable style and any objections we may have to his moral standpoint. But it is no biography; it is an abstract; a philosophical generalization of a life and an epoch. Its last chapter, on "Voltaire at Ferney," is its most interesting one—the only one, in fact, which is thoroughly intelligible to "common readers," who may not be familliar with the literature and history of the eighteenth century. Even this chapter fails of the most illustrative data of the period. We can hardly suppose that the author was not aware of Gaberel's *Voltaire et les Génevois*, but he has not availed himself of its original and singularly interesting materials. Gaberel is an *ancien pasteur* of Geneva, and has probably known old men who knew Voltaire. He has, at least, known old Swiss families which preserved collections of the correspondence of the "patriarch" with their ancestors, and records of his conversations and local doings. To these, his influential function, as *pasteur*, gave him ready access—papers of Dr. Condet, Mouchon, Vernes, Professor De Roches, the naturalists Bon-

net and Candolle, of Picot, and Voltaire's celebrated medical friend Tronchin—names still familiar in Geneva. The good *ancien pasteur* searched thoroughly these sources, and, making out a striking and somewhat amusing history of Voltaire's relations to the Genevese during a quarter of a century, treated his fellow-citizens to a course of public lectures on the subject, which were given to the public in one of the most entertaining little volumes of the whole Voltairean literature. The book is scarcely tinged with the professional feeling that we might expect from the writer; it is pervaded by candor and a quiet good humor. Taken with the author's similar work on *Rousseau et les Génevois*, with the *Correspondance* of Grimm and Diderot, and especially with the *correspondance générale* of Voltaire, it gives us a thorough insight into one of the most remarkable intellectual lives on record.

We select the Swiss period of Voltaire's long career, as affording not only some of the most characteristic facts of his history, but also the most striking illustrations of his humor, and of the power of his pen—its power especially in memorable, beneficent achievements. But we can take, even within this limitation, but cursory glimpses of this marvelous literary life, extending through a quarter of a century. Whether for good or for evil, or for both, Voltaire was, as Morley says, "a stupendous power."

His "life and character constitute in themselves a new and most prodigious era." "His pen was more potent than any king's scepter," says Carlyle. This author treats justly his faults, both literary and moral, but acknowledges him a "European power," the most forcible with the pen since Luther. He was one of the most indefatigable workers known to literary history, giving, at Ferney, fourteen hours a day to labor, though much of the time sick in his bed. There has never been a center of equal literary power in Europe, not excepting Weimar, under Goethe's intellectual reign. He wrote there many of those works which fill ninety-seven volumes in Baudouin's first edition. His most telling correspondence emanated thence—most of those seven thousand published letters, which, his editor says, are but half the number written, every sentence of which, as Morley remarks, is characteristic, alive with the mental vitality of the man. Thence, too, as the greatest wit of his age, he flashed over Europe his epigrams and sarcasms. There he fought out, as probably no other man then living could have fought, his great battles for toleration, in the memorable cases of the Calas family, of Sirven, and of La Barre—victorious contests, in which his "orthodox" neighbors, the "venerable company of pastors of Geneva"—good though grim men—were proud to array themselves under his banner—that banner which, Morley says, "was ever in the front and cen-

ter of the fight; that was many a time rent, but was never out of the field." Strange, scoffing, unscrupulous, yet humane old man, let him have his due! He was called by the devout Calvinists of Geneva the *vieux diable de Ferney*—"the old devil of Ferney;" but a generous proverb teaches us to "give the devil his due."

The most marvelous thing about Voltaire's relations with the Swiss is, that he ever pitched his tent among them at all. He may not have felt safe elsewhere, for he had memories of the Bastile. The court at Versailles was hostile; the Sorbonne was inexorable. Satan himself, abroad with unmistakable hoof, horn, and tail, could hardly have been more alarming to the Catholic doctors; still the irrepressible satirist had as yet the freedom of most of Europe. He had lived and written for years at Cirey with Madame du Châtelet; he was a favorite at the little court of Lunéville; the Elector Palatine, Charles Theodore, wished to impress him into the court of Mannheim; and several of the German princes were ambitious to possess him. The Low Countries were as good a refuge for literary freethinkers as Switzerland was for the theologians. Spinoza had died in peace in the former; Servetus had died at the stake in the latter. The public executioner still burned proscribed books before the Hôtel de Ville of Geneva, and was yet to burn there the works of Rousseau and of

Voltaire himself. Yet the gay old man turned away from all the rest of Europe for the Swiss boundary. Whatever was his chief motive for going thither, we can hardly avoid suspecting that there was mixed with it a spice of the humorous mischievousness which characterized him. He would not only seek an asylum with the grave and metaphysical Swiss, but also try his hand with them, as he had tried it with the Jesuits and Jansenists in Paris. At all events, wherever he found the men, he could not help attempting the sport. It was in his nature to do so.

Carlyle has told, fully enough, the story of his rupture with Frederick the Great, his escape from the court of Berlin, where his humor was more supreme than Frederick's royalty; and of the diatribe of "the doctor Akakia," which, in overwhelming poor Maupertuis, the head of Frederick's Academy, raised to its climax the ire of the monarch. Collini, the secretary of Voltaire, has told naïvely the story of the journey to the Swiss frontier: the fantastic scenes at Frankfürt with Frederick's representative, in which the fury of the philosopher became superlatively comical: and the slow passage onward in his own carriage, "which was large, commodious, well suspended, garnished every-where with pockets and magazines," abundance of baggage behind and in front, several portfolios within full of manuscripts, a strong box for

his gold, letters of exchange, and other precious effects; two domestics on the *banc;* the philosopher, his niece, Madame Denis, and the secretary in the interior—the whole wheeling along the highway in a sort of state, drawn by four, sometimes by six, horses; the philosopher speeding the hours with inexhaustible humor, and writhing and jesting at the pinches of his sciatica. On his way he is greeted by the famous book-publisher of Geneva, Gabriel Cramer, who comes to propose an edition of his entire works—a noble-looking personage, who makes a good first impression on the philosopher. "You are a printer?" exclaimed Voltaire; "I should have taken you for a field-marshal." He ever afterward, says Pastor Gaberel, cherished a lively affection for the "distinguished-looking bookseller." Voltaire was a warm friend of booksellers. He esteemed their craft next to that of book-making. Except the "Henriade," which had been published in London by subscription, he gave away to his publishers his almost innumerable productions. Many a fortune has been made through his liberality to them.

Arriving at Geneva, he negotiated for a beautiful property, as a summer "hermitage," not far from the confluence of the Arve and the Rhone, afterward known as the Délice: for his winter home he chose Monrion, near Lausanne; and, meanwhile, secured a "magnificent house" in Lausanne, and two es-

tates in the immediate neighborhood of the Genevan frontier, one at Tournay, the other at Ferney —the famous *chateau* which is still a Mecca to literary pilgrims. "Here I see from my bed this glorious lake," he writes from Monrion to d'Alembert, "which bathes a hundred gardens, at the foot of my terrace; which forms a calm sea in front of my windows, on right and left, a stream of a dozen leagues, and which waters the fields of Savoy, crowned with the Alps in the distance." "I have a droll little kingdom of my own in a Swiss valley," he again writes. "I am as the Old Man of the Mountain; with my four estates [the Délice being not yet secured] I am on my four paws. Monrion is my little cabin, my winter palace, sheltered from the cruel north wind. I wish you were with me in this delicious abode. There is no more beautiful prospect in the world; the Point of the Seraglio at Constantinople is not finer." Though he was always complaining that he had "no stomach," he now exults over his good fare. "Allez!" he exclaims, "we need no sympathy; we have the good wine of La Côte, the excellent wine of Lavaux; we eat fat young pullets, grouse, and trout of twenty pounds weight."

Forthwith he began his experiment of reforming the Swiss. He would Parisianize them. He archly hints at his design of "perverting" the "pedantic" community "who preserve the good memory of

their reformers, submit to the tyrannical laws of Calvin, and believe in their preachers. He made hearty acquaintance with the *élite* citizens of Lausanne, and with the Bernese gentry, who were then masters of the Canton de Vaud. He kept open doors and a luxurious table. His facile French manners were irresistible even to the solid magistrates. His mansion became the resort of the grave and the gay; and, though now above sixty years old, he was the gayest of the gay. His uncontrollable humor kept up a vivid sensation from Lausanne to Berne on the one hand, and to Geneva on the other—such a sensation as bewildered and bewitched the hitherto sober, cultivated Swiss circles. As the best means of their emancipation, he attempted theatrical entertainments, and extemporized a theater in his own house. He was surrounded, says Gaberel, with a numerous circle of men of talents and women of intelligence, and soon had them playing his most recent dramatic creations, to the astonishment of themselves and the whole canton. *Adelaide de Guesclin*, *L'Enfant prodigue*, and *Zaire* were triumphant. He called these dramas "my Birds of Lake Leman." The theater had hitherto been a foreign profanity, inadmissible in the Protestant cantons. It had the charm of novelty, and the Vaudois nobles, women as well as men, gave themselves enthusiastically to the study of their *rôles*, as assigned by Voltaire.

He was astonished at their aptness in the histrionic art. "Your Parisian actors," he wrote, "are ice compared with these. All the company play with ardor. We have a beautiful theater, an assembly which melts into tears. Visitors run to us from thirty leagues around; and this beautiful country has become the asylum of the arts, of the pleasures, and of taste. The actors form themselves; they are fruits which the Alps and Jura never before bore. Cæsar never foresaw, when he came to ravage this little corner of the world, that there would be one day here more *esprit* than at Rome."

For a time he seemed to carry every thing before him. It appeared quite possible for him to "Parisianize" Lausanne; but, while his humor generally charmed, his sarcasms hurt, and he could forego no opportunity of satirizing his best friends. He was on the best terms with the Bernese rulers; but most of these honest functionaries had no great claims to culture, and their officious friendship afforded him irresistible opportunities of ridicule. "Eh, why the deuce, Monsieur Voltaire," said one of them to him, "are you all the time making so many verses? For what good, I pray you? All this leads to nothing. With your talent, you could soon become something in this country. Behold me; I am a bailiff!" Voltaire kept his table, with sometimes fifty *convives* at it, roaring with this and

similar stories; for, however poor the story, he could give it overwhelming effect by his fantastic humor. The grave men of Lausanne soon became shy of him, and the gay ones began to look askance at him and at one another; for who could tell who might be next flayed alive by the unconquerable satirist? Haller—"le grand Haller"—the commanding Swiss intellect of the day, seemed alone to hold him in check. Voltaire respected the genius of this eminent *savant*, and coveted his favorable opinion. Haller heard *Zaire*, and gave to an enthusiastic fellow-auditor no flattering criticism upon it. "Eh, Monsieur de Voltaire," said the hearer, "you praise strongly Haller, who speaks of you in a very different tone." "You have reason to be surprised, my friend," replied the ever-ready humorist; "but it is quite possible, you know, that we may both be mistaken."

Voltaire's experiment at Lausanne was evidently failing; his wit was too reckless, his irreverence for religion too free. He quarreled with the city *savants* and disputed with the clergy; he saw, at last, that it was time to decamp. Shooting some Parthian arrows, he escaped to Geneva, where the *Délice* had been preparing for him; and not far off, almost shaded by the Jura, Ferney offered him shelter, just within the French boundary. To remove to Geneva was "jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire," yet he set himself down before

the venerable city of Calvin with a hilarious expectation of what might follow. The little commonwealth was still an independent republic, and remained such till 1814. It would seem to have been the last place on the planet for the foremost humorist and skeptic of the age. But the incompatibility between the man and the place may have been one of its attractions to him. It piqued his self-confident humor. Geneva retained yet its old "orthodoxy." It had no theater—had never had one, except as an occasional indulgence to foreign embassadors and their retinues, and then only in their residences. It possessed many wealthy and highly cultivated families; but, though the French language was its vernacular, the French manners, and especially the French skepticism of the eighteenth century, had hardly penetrated the city. The successive issues of the "Encyclopedia" were received there with extraordinary interest, and even caused a sort of intellectual *émeute*, as they did, indeed, generally in Europe, by the prodigious scheme, ability, and bold speculations of that notable work; but the Genevese discriminated between its science and its skepticism, and remained firm in their religious traditions. D'Alembert's famous article on "Geneva," in which he pronounced the preachers of the city Socinians, was clamorously resented. It called forth formal protests of their orthodoxy, and strengthened the loyalty of the

people to their old faith and Church. At Voltaire's arrival the "venerable company of pastors" had still powerful sway, and the more than Spartan *régime* of Calvin had been but slightly modified. All citizens, high and low, were required, by that *régime*, to be out of bed at four o'clock in the morning in summer, and at six in winter. "The lodging, the nourishment, the clothing, the diversions, the expenses of the people were determined by inflexible regulations," says Pastor Gaberel. The "Consistoire" was an ecclesiastical tribunal which watched, with Argus eyes, the manners as well as the morals of the citizens; making no distinction between the social classes, censuring or punishing with equal severity the highest magistrate and the humblest citizen, the millionaire and the peasant, the military chief and the simple soldier. The citizens had furniture only of ordinary wood. The law required that they "should have on their tables, on ordinary days, only two dishes, one of animal, the other of vegetable food, without pastry." The *savants* of the commonwealth (and they were comparatively numerous) were as "orthodox" as the "venerable company of pastors." Voltaire could expect no sympathy from them. Abauzit ranked foremost among them; Voltaire and Rousseau both revered him. "I have been a long time traveling in order to see a superior man," said an eminent visitor to Ferney. "You

have been, then, to Geneva to see Abauzit," rejoined Voltaire. Rousseau said the age had produced but one philosopher, "the wise and virtuous Abauzit." But Abauzit was profoundly Christian. Equally so were the great physicians, geologists, botanists, etc., who then rendered the city famous throughout Europe—Deluc, de Saussure, Bonnet, Trembly, Odier, Tingry, Vieusseux, and Tronchin. Bonnet published a "Defense of Christianity," which is remarkable for its ability. It is improbable that there ever has been another European city the *élite* minds of which were so uniformly and profoundly religious. D'Alembert acknowledged, in the Encyclopedia, that all the *savants* at Geneva are distinguished from their *confrères* of France and Germany by a complete adhesion to the evangelical dogmas." Voltaire was amazed at the fact, but confronted it with defiant humor. He found a small yet rampant party of the citizens who were restless under the prevailing puritanical *régime*—men and women who had been to Paris and had brought home "liberal" ideas. These he hoped to enlist as his first recruits, and, with them, overthrow and confound the solid *savants* and stolid pastors.

He repeated the tactics he had attempted at Lausanne, particularly the histrionic entertainments. An extemporized theater was ready at the Délice even before the mansion itself was completed. Many rich families accepted his invitations with eagerness,

and "the poet," says Pastor Gaberel, "had nothing more pressing on his hands than to get up some comedies, by which he expected to subdue the Genevan society." The young barbers and *perruquiers* of the city had already been preparing the way for him, by acting in private *Mahomet*, *Cinna*, *Le Mort de César*, etc. The "Consistorie" had censured them, and exhorted them to "observe better the orders of their superiors, and attend to their business, without stopping for play or any other excess." But these remonstrances had little effect. The higher classes, men of wealth and women of *esprit*, resorted to Délice, and turned actors and actresses for the nonce. The city council and the pastors became alarmed, and warned the intractable philosopher. He retreated a few miles, and constructed another theater on his estate at Tournay, on the Genevese frontier, where he had fuller liberty, and where he presented on the boards some artists from the Comédie Française, of Paris, whom his friend Lekain had brought to the Délice as guests. Lekain was the chief actor, the Talma, of the times, and entered heartily into the philosopher's design of subduing the "pedantic city." The city councilors met, passed admonitory resolutions, and invited "messieurs the pastors to visit the persons to whom Monsieur Voltaire had distributed *rôles*, and engage them to abstain." The warning applied particularly to the

Délice; but when the crafty innovator betook himself and his tempting gayeties to Tournay, the council, at the instance of the alarmed pastors, repeated and enlarged its prohibition, expressly forbidding all subjects of the State to assist in the representation of pieces, whether within its territory or its environs."

Voltaire resented these proceedings as a challenge. He resolved to return to the Délice, and reopen there the contest in sight of the city. "We will play our comedies at the Délice," he wrote to Paris; "we will play them in spite of these Genevan *perruques*." He was determined now to make a demonstration, and he sent again to Paris for Lekain. "I expect Lekain," he wrote to D'Argental; "he will declaim verses to the children of Calvin. Their manners are much softened; they would no more burn Servetus." His humor became audacious, for there was a fascination to him in this encounter with the dignities and gravities of the little commonwealth. Travelers of our day know well "Calvin's chair" in the old cathedral, the scene of his pulpit labors. On Sundays it is still in the pulpit for the preacher; but on other days it stands below for the reverent eyes of the visitors, few of whom fail to gratify their self-complacence by sitting in it. Voltaire writes: "Apropos of Calvin, I intend to play a joke which will startle the Genevese. I shall procure an old arm-

chair which was used by their reformer; I will use it on the boards in the conversation between Augustus and Cinna. What a hubbub this will make when the preachers hear of it!" Some days later he wrote: "*Eh bien*, I have triumphed! I have made all the council of Geneva weep. Lekain has been sublime, and I corrupt the youth of this pedantic city." He alludes to the charge of the pastors and councilors against theaters—that they corrupt the popular morals. He dictated to D'Alembert, who was now with him, a part of the article of the Encyclopedia on Geneva, which contends that "by right legal regulations the city could have dramatic spectacles, and yet preserve its morals. Theatrical representations would form the taste of the citizens, would give them a *finesse* of tact, a delicacy of sentiment, which it is difficult to acquire without this aid." Rousseau heard, at the distance of Paris, of the struggle going on between his native city and his great rival, and, though himself a writer for the theater, he entered the lists against it. He boasted on all his title-pages that he was a "citizen of Geneva," for he was proud of the republic. He sent forth his famous treatise (of 200 pages) against the introduction of the drama among his Spartan fellow-citizens, predicting that it would despoil them of their democratic virtues. It is the most powerful argument ever written against the theater. It was not

difficult to convince the pastors and the *savants* of the city; for though they knew that the Athenian tragedies—the immortal remains of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides—are the most religious documents which remain to us from the Greek literature, they knew also that Aristophanes was their more popular companion. Rousseau's essay enraged Voltaire, but did not discourage him. "The Consistoire," "says Pastor Gaberel, "joined itself to Rousseau, and promoted his remonstrance." But Voltaire, always gleeful in fight, announced with great noise the opening of a theater at the Châtelaine, not far from the Délice. The "company of pastors" rose as one man against the audacity of the philosopher, and ordered a general pastoral visitation of all the parishes, in order to "obtain pledges of abstinence from the citizens." They obtained them so numerously that it was believed the actors would have to play to empty benches. Voltaire brought Lekain again into the field, and made diligent preparations for a triumph. A good citizen, M. Mouchon, who could not resist the temptation, wrote a letter to his brother, a pasteur at Basle, describing Voltaire's victory. "The day for the opening was fixed," he says; "the true patriots, friends of religion and the country, had promised not to place a foot within the building; they had given the actors over to abandonment and mortification; they stood stiffly

erect, and resolved to fight down the temptation: but, alas! the day arrived, and toward evening all the world was on the way to the Châtelaine. It was as a procession. They went in a furor." They could not resist Lekain. Three times a week he played three pieces of Voltaire's, and fairly dazzled the little community. Carriages were hired at unheard-of prices. The city could not furnish enough for the demand. Old hacks were brought in from the neighboring towns of Chêne and Carouge. "As for myself," confesses the writer, "I was carried away with the general folly; I could not resist it." The enthusiasm rose so rapidly that at last he had to be in his seat by eleven o'clock in the morning, and at that early hour he found by his side an old magistrate as infatuated as himself. "I saw things sublime," he says, "in the acting of Lekain; but not the least part of the spectacle was Voltaire himself, seated against the first *coulisse*, in view of all the spectators, applauding as one possessed, striking the floor with his cane, and shouting aloud his plaudits, or helping the tragic effect with his handkerchief at his eyes." At the end of one of the scenes the exultant poet ran after Lekain on the stage, seized his hand, and embraced him before the excited people. He resembled an old man "*de comédie*," for he was "clothed in the costume of the good old times, and could sustain his trembling limbs only by the

aid of his cane; his face wore all the traces of decay; his cheeks were hollow and wrinkled, his nose long, his eyes sunken, but full of fire." The scene, as more fully described by Mouchon, was thoroughly Voltairian. The triumph of the old humorist was complete. The Châtelaine theater was kept open till 1766, when the performances were transferred within the walls of the city. "The theater," wrote Voltaire, "is within the city. In vain has Jean Jacques played the part of a fool in this affair." Some two years later, however, the building was burned down. Many of the good people arriving at the place with their buckets full of water emptied them into the street, exclaiming "*Eh bien!* it is only the theater. Let those who will extinguish the fire." Voltaire, indignant, cried out, "Ah, this Geneva! when one believes he holds it, all escapes him. *Perruques* and little wigs, it is all one!" He could not be defeated, however. He re-opened the Châtelaine, and at last re-entered the city, where the theater has ever since remained, and is to-day one of the most conspicuous public edifices.

He now sought new occasions for his humorous warfare against "the *dévots fantastiques* and clergy at Geneva." He delighted to provoke and humble the Consistoire, the tribunal by which the pastors maintained their rigorous censorship. If he could break its power, he would "modernize," "civilize,"

as he thought, the whole commonwealth. One Robert Covelle, a citizen of somewhat "violent character," was cited before this assembly, to be reproved for some bad example. Its president ordered him to kneel down and penitently receive the reprimand. For two hundred years this humble attitude had been customary before the venerable ecclesiastical body. The most eminent sinners had reverently conformed to it, happy to escape severer humiliation; but Covelle stoutly refused, and asked two weeks for reflection on the demand. Meanwhile Voltaire wrote for him a *mémoire* of "remarkable ability" against it. Covelle re-appearing before the hitherto inexorable tribunal, obstinately continued to decline its demand, and threatened to publish "this essay against genuflection." "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" Covell's *mémoire* was published, and he soon had the whole community by the ears. He became a sort of religious hero protesting against a judicial profanation. The affair took the proportions of a public question. The "fierce democracie" of Geneva were ever ready for any such question. They argued that, however long this humiliating formality had been inscribed in the municipal ordinances, the times had changed, and the city should change the "painful custom;" that it was a fag-end of popery; that repentance is an affair between the conscience and the divine Judge; that man should

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kneel only before God, and Christ has taught that this duty should be performed in profound secrecy, without witnesses; that no priest or other man should intervene between the creature who repents and the Creator who pardons. For some time the astonished Consistoire, seldom or never before challenged since the day of Calvin, would not yield. The question was not only discussed with ever-increasing heat in the streets, the wine-shops and the homes of the people, but the press teemed with pamphlets about it. These collected publications make three great volumes, which, says the good *ancien pasteur*, Gaberel, "are most indigestible reading." Voltaire was in his glory amid this "confusion worse confounded" of popular and clerical dialectics. His ironical humor had never found a better field. He published his famous poem, the *Guerre de Genève*, (War of Geneva.) He struck with his satiric scourge right and left, front and rear, against the traditional notions and customs of the city. He rained pleasantries on the clergy, some of which Pastor Gaberel admits "are very *spirituelle*." He dealt freely and even grossly in calumnies; he sacrificed Rousseau, and Paris re-echoed back to Geneva his Olympian laughter. The whole affair, so religiously grave at first, had taken an aspect of ridicule, and suddenly subsided after Voltaire's poem. The city council abolished the custom of kneeling before the venerable Con-

sistoire, the obstinate Covelle escaped his reprimand, and Voltaire was exultant. Covelle even demanded to be admitted again to the eucharist, then one of the highest conditions of citizenship in Geneva. The Consistoire required him to show his fitness for it by denying twelve letters, written and published in his name by Voltaire, and by renouncing a pension of 300 francs a year settled on him by the philosopher. Covelle refused all their requisitions. They gave up the useless struggle; "and," says Gaberel, naïvely, "the Consistoire decided not to occupy itself any more with this individual, which was certainly the wisest course it could take." This fracas about a matter of ancient ceremony was really the beginning of that declension of the power and censorship of the Consistoire which is to-day complete. No clergy is more respected, no laity more free, than those of Geneva, and we doubt whether either regrets the victory of the unexemplary Covelle and the Democritan "patriarch."

But we delay too long with Voltaire at the Délice; let us follow him to Ferney. It is less than five miles from Geneva, at the foot of the Jura, with the Alps towering in the background. He could still overlook his favorite field of battle. "When I shake my wig," he said, "its powder dusts the whole republic." A beautiful refuge had the old man prepared here for his declining years;

and, in a letter to Madame Du Deffand, he declares that he is at last thoroughly happy. The mansion is invisible from the highway; a long avenue shaded by superb trees leads to it, passing within a rod from its front, the stone chapel built by the philosopher for the villagers, which still bears the notable inscription, "Deo Erexit Voltaire," erected to God by Voltaire. The theater, which stood on the opposite side of the avenue, has disappeared. The mansion itself is simple, but not inelegant; it looks down cheerfully on its front flower garden, inclosed by a lofty grille fence. Behind it extend terraced walks, with arbors, a fountain, and umbrageous colonnades of trees planted by the "patriarch," under the shelter of which he composed many of his works. It commands the best view of Mont Blanc anywhere seen in Switzerland. All within the *château* wears an aspect of snug comfort and simple elegance. Certain rooms are kept as he left them; there is his sleeping-room, with its bed and prim embroidered chairs intact: his little adjacent sitting-room, with his marble cenotaph, designed by the Marchioness de Villette to enshrine his heart. The walls are covered with paintings—oil portraits of his royal correspondents, Frederick the Great, Catherine of Russia, Madame Du Châtelet, the actor Lekain; and numerous engravings of Washington, Franklin, Newton, d'Alembert, Helvetius, Diderot, and other notabilities of his times.

Voltaire really founded Ferney; when he went there it consisted of a few huts; he left it finally with more than 1,200 inhabitants and a flourishing business. He was lavish with his money in aiding the villagers, and they were gratefully attached to him. He was rich; for, like most first-rate men of intellect—Shakspeare, Goethe, Walter Scott, and others—he never believed that pecuniary recklessness or incapacity is an essential attribute of genius. Though he gave away his copyrights, he managed skillfully his early resources, and died with an annual income of nearly two hundred thousand livres. This was enormous wealth for a man whose whole work was literary, and money in his time was worth more than twice its present value. He was an adroit dealer in the public stocks. Bungener says that at one time he had two or three millions of capital in "a prodigious chaos of small papers—letters of exchange, contracts, bills of every form and every value"—in his portfolio. He loved to wander in this forest of scraps and figures. There was not, however, a particle of avarice in his nature. He sought wealth that he might be independent of patrons and of the public, and might speak out his opinions more bravely in the face of kings and people. "I was so mortified with the humiliations that dishonor letters," he says, "that, to relieve my disgust, I resolved to make what scamps call a great fortune." Having got it, he took skillful care

of it, but gave liberally on all proper occasions. He lived sumptuously, spending profusely on his lands, driving into Geneva in his stately coach drawn by six horses, keeping open doors and a bountiful table. His house was often crowded with guests—fifty at once—representatives of the literature, the beauty, the nobility, of the times. For nearly a quarter of a century he was the *aubergiste*, as he said—the innkeeper in general—for Europe. Ferney was one of the most powerful courts on the continent; and Grimm tells us that its domestic affairs interested, more or less, every court of Europe. During the twenty years that Voltaire occupied it he kept most of the continent, from St. Petersburg to Berlin, from Berlin to Paris, from Paris to Rome, in excited expectation, and the ruling, and especially the ecclesiastical classes, in anxious apprehension of what next should come from his never-resting pen. Priests and kings dreaded his sarcasms. When nearly two generations of authors, who had been his contemporaries, had passed away, he was still controlling the public mind—the latest and freshest writer, incessantly sending forth something new, which commanded attention by its ability, though it provoked anathemas by its heresy. "It seemed at last," wrote Grimm, "that the old man, always sick, was never to die." Unquestionably he and his correspondent, Frederick the Great, were, as Morley represents

them, the two most powerful men then extant on the continent. Both did immense evil, but also, let us hope, great good. "Voltaire and Frederick," says Morley, "were the two leaders of the two chief movements then going on in the great work of transforming the old Europe into the new."

But let us return to our incidents or anecdotes; for these, after all, are the truest indices of a life or an era; a fact that biographers and historians do not always sufficiently consider. Herodotus was the greatest of story-tellers, and the Father of History.

The *ancien pasteur* Gaberel speaks with his usual candor and kindliness of Voltaire's good deeds at Ferney. He has gathered not a few local accounts of his charities, and might have added many more from the books of the period. Collini, his simple-hearted secretary, speaks especially of his "humane and compassionate heart." Collini had to leave him, while they resided at the Délice, for reasons not creditable to the secretary; but he departed with deep emotion, and in his old age, nearly a half century later, recalled the Délice as the scene of his best happiness. Voltaire obtained for him a good resting-place for the remainder of his life, as court librarian at Mannheim, and before his departure conversed freely with him, through an hour, in his study. "Have you money enough?" asked the patriarch. "Enough for my journey and some time after it," replied Collini.

Without rejoining he went to his bureau, and, drawing out a rouleau of louis, said, "Take this: one knows not what may happen." "He embraced me, and I quitted with tearful eyes the mansion of the Délice." A poor laborer of Ferney was imprisoned for a debt of 7,500 francs. Voltaire ordered it all to be paid in his own name. His agent replied that it would be lost, as the prisoner was too poor ever to repay it. "So much the better," rejoined the philosopher; "one never loses in restoring a father to his family, a citizen to the State." A widow of the neighborhood, with two children, was oppressed by her creditors. Voltaire not only advanced her money without interest, but aided her to raise more by a mortgage on her little property. Still later he helped her by purchasing the property at a price much higher than its value. One of his villagers, who owed him 600 livres, was reduced to distress by the loss of his cattle; Voltaire sent him two good cows and a quittance of his entire debt. An agriculturist was ruined by having lost a case in court; Voltaire procured his papers and had them examined by a lawyer of Geneva, who reported that the poor man was condemned unjustly. Returning him the papers, Voltaire handed him also 1,000 écus, (crowns,) saying, "There, my friend, is enough to repair the wrongs of the court. A new trial will only torment you; don't attempt it. If you wish to establish yourself on my lands, I will take care

of your fate." The Jesuits at Ornex wished to enlarge their estate by acquiring, at a miserably depreciated valuation, the property of some minors, which was mortgaged for 15,000 francs, but worth four times that amount. The ruin of the family seemed inevitable, when Voltaire heard of the danger. His humanity as well as his detestation of the Jesuits led him to interpose. He furnished the 15,000 francs necessary for the release of the property from the mortgage; and its proprietors, the family de Prez of Crassier, had so well improved his aid that, at the subsequent expulsion of the Jesuits from France, they were able to purchase all the real estate of the Order at Ornex.

He especially sympathized with literary or educated sufferers. Arnaud de Baculard received large sums from him while struggling in his dramatic career. At his first success he wished to repay his benefactor, but Voltaire would accept nothing. "A child," he said, "returns not the sugar-plums which his father has given him." Thiriot, who had done business for him as notary clerk. was reduced to deep distress; Voltaire sheltered him a year at Ferney, procured him a profitable appointment as literary correspondent of Frederick the Great, and, aiding him to pack his trunk, concealed in it fifty louis. His charitable interest for the niece of Corneille is well known. He found her in wretched poverty, gave her a home in his *château*, adopted and edu-

cated her, made known her condition to all Europe, and issued a new and annotated edition of Corneille's works for her dowry. The edition brought 90,000 francs, and the niece of the poet was happily married and settled in Ferney. Subsequently he loaned the family 12,000 francs. At the birth of their first child he called to congratulate the young mother, and left on her table an elegant silver vase, in which they found a quittance of the whole loan. This certainly was handsomely done. And it is only just to say that it was characteristic of the *Vieux de Ferney*, whatever diabolism characterized him in other respects.

Meanwhile his irreverent humor could not be repressed in the retirement of Ferney. He kept Geneva astir with his publications. The pastors and magistrates denounced them, and the booksellers were reprimanded and fined. His *Candide* and *Dictionnaire philosophique* were publicly burned by the executioner. But he hired, at a considerable cost, a troop of colporteurs, who insinuated the obnoxious books into families, into the schools, and even into the churches. The pastors had to organize a counter system of colportage, and for some time all Geneva was in fermentation. The *octrois*, or custom-houses at the gates of the city, watched particularly against the introduction of the proscribed works; but the crafty "patriarch" and his friends were a match for the perplexed magistrates.

He sent to the council word that he had been informed that on a certain day some pernicious books, maliciously attributed to him, would be smuggled into the city through a particular gate—"follies which I despise," he said. "I believe it my duty to make this fact known to you, and you will do well to repress such infractions of the public order and peace." This was but a ruse. The attention of the bewildered authorities being concentrated at one of the gates, the books were successfully brought in at another—"a large cargo of them."

He maintained the Roman Catholic worship for his villagers in the chapel on his premises, and kept in his *château* two curés for the purpose; one of whom was his famous "Père Adam," who was for years his almoner, his evening companion at chess, and of whom he wrote to a friend: "It is necessary not to deceive yourself about him—he is not the greatest man in the world." The neighboring Savoyard clergy preached stoutly against the philosopher as Antichrist, and their rustic parishioners dreaded his very shadow. They believed him to be Satan incarnated. Their terror became a pleasantry to him. Seeing a number of them together at work, he donned his theatrical costume of his "Mahomet," and, plunging in among them, launched at them the imprecations of the Arabian conqueror. The "poor Savoyards vanished as fast as their legs would take them,"

says Pastor Gaberel, "and the identity of Voltaire and Satan was very solidly established on the left bank of the Rhone." Nevertheless he wished, as he said, to be "exemplary" before his own immediate and confiding people; for Ferney was virtually a feudal seigniory, and he was their lord. He therefore made his Easter confession to Father Adam, and the next day marched in procession, with his priests and household, followed by the villagers with halberds, muskets, tambours, and trumpets, to the little chapel, where he received the communion. But a more surprising scene followed. At the moment for the preaching, Voltaire, waving aside his curé, mounted the pulpit, and delivered a fiery sermon against theft, for a peasant had recently stolen one of his cows. He believed the thief would be present on so remarkable an occasion; he denounced him and apostrophized him, exhorting him to make forthwith confession to Father Adam, and be thankful to Providence that he escaped hanging. He waxed so warm in his harangue that the curé, alarmed at the irregularity of the scene, and thinking of his bishop, rushed out of the building; the peasants precipitated themselves after him, and left the "patriarch" to finish his sermon and his ire at his leisure. The Bishop of Annecy sent him a grave remonstrance; he replied that "it is not sufficient to rescue one's vassals from the horrors of poverty, and contribute as

much as possible to their temporal happiness; it is necessary also to edify them; and it would indeed be extraordinary that a seigneur of a parish could not do, in a church which he himself has built, what all the pretended reformers do in theirs."

Whether from fear of him, or for other reasons, high papal ecclesiastics seemed disposed to conciliate him. Some of them were merry guests at Ferney. The Pope accepted the dedication of his *Mahomet*, and even deigned to correspond with him and to send him a relic for his chapel. His seigniory was in the district of Gex; the Capuchin order of monks had a house there; and Voltaire, to the astonishment of all Europe, and the special amusement of the philosophers of Paris, actually obtained by patent, from the general of the order at Rome, the appointment of temporal head of the brotherhood. "Smile not," he wrote La Harpe; "I am a Capuchin, father temporal of the convent of Gex; I have the right to wear the costume, and I have received the patent from our venerable father, the General d'Allembella." To the Duchesse de Choiseul he wrote: "I receive the cord of St. Francis, which I fear will hardly restore the vigor of my youth; meanwhile deign to receive the paternal respects and the prayers of *Brother François unworthy Capuchin.*" His letters, as preserved by Grimm and Diderot, are ebullient with humor over the dignities and prerogatives of his new office, with

his offers of benediction, of absolution, of indulgences, or threats of excommunication and perdition. "Capuchin as I am," he writes to D'Alembert, "I extend my mercy even over Geneva. I am father temporal of the Capuchins of my little country. I will give you my malediction if you write me not, and if you send me not whatever you know of the assembly of the clergy. Your brother V., unworthy Capuchin." An Irish lord, on his way to Rome, called at Ferney. "Have you no commission for the Holy Father, monsieur?" asked the guest. "Yes, my lord," replied Voltaire; and writing hastily on a card, said, "Hand him this." The guileless Irishman, who knew not a word of French, scrupulously acquitted himself of the commission at his first audience. The card read: "His Holiness is entreated to send to the philosopher of Ferney the ears of the Inquisitor-General in scented paper." Clement XIV., a liberal-minded pontiff, took no offense at the joke, but wrote on the reverse of the card: "His Holiness is very sorry that he cannot execute your commission, but under the present pontificate the Grand Inquisitor has neither eyes nor ears." This complaisance was not, however, universal among Catholics. The Sorbonne and the French ecclesiastics generally anathematized the Capuchin patriarch. Nicolandot, an ultramontane writer, was indignant at the indulgence shown him. "Ferney," he says, "has been for

twenty years the capital of intellect. All monarchs have been eager to recognize this principality; they salute it as the center of civilization; they send to the king of civilization weekly couriers; they give orders to their embassadors to respect all his fantasies. Parliaments have burned with desire to serve against the court of Ferney, but the court of France has let it alone; the Bishop of Annecy has menaced it with his thunders, but the city of the Vicar of Jesus Christ has tolerated its continual insolence and gross outrages. Floods of strangers flow without ceasing to Ferney — dukes, marshals, academicians, priests, journalists. All roads lead to Ferney, as to Rome. It has been the aristocratic capital of *ésprit* in an age when all the world has piqued itself on having *ésprit*."

But some good things came out of Ferney; splendid and beneficent things, which, amid the jesting humor that it spread over Europe, could not fail to associate with them an ever-enduring sentiment of veneration. We have alluded to the cases of Calas, Sirven, La Barre, etc., in which Voltaire undertook the bravest fight for toleration and religious liberty which has occured in France since the armed struggles of the Huguenots; and in which the pastors of Geneva were proud to rally around him, notwithstanding the vexations he had so long occasioned them. They wended their way to Ferney in those processions of pilgrims which flocked thither as dev-

otees on the highways to Rome; they dined at the "patriarch's" table and slept under his roof, that they might discuss with him more fully the wrongs of their Protestant brethren in France, and direct his labors in their behalf; they acted as his agents to procure documentary evidence, proceedings of courts, etc., for they knew that the pen of no man could tell these sad facts more effectively than his. The frank-hearted *ancien pasteur* waxes eloquent over the old man's services for humanity and toleration. "In Voltaire's time Frenchmen who rejected the papal authority were still chained in the galleys with thieves and assassins; their wives were imprisoned in infected dungeons; their children were forced into the schools of the monks, and taught to curse, before the cross, the religion of their fathers. The mountains concealed yet in their fastnesses the hunted Protestants, pursued like brigands by the royal troops. The high dignitaries of the Church blessed God when they received news of these sanguinary persecutions. Some remonstrances were published, but hitherto without effect. The 'philosophers' themselves, bent on the overthrow of Romanism, seemed careless of these individual sufferings. Suddenly, in the face of this indifference of the materialists; of the judges who punished the crime of Protestant worship with exile, the galleys, or the scaffold; of Parliaments which let the policy of Rome have its way; of ministers of

state who bowed before the persecuting priestcraft, and of the reckless libertine on the throne—arose one man, philosopher, historian, poet, and satirist, whose fame filled Europe, who corresponded with most of its sovereigns, whom even the Pope tolerated, though he trampled under foot the papal dogmas and power—a man whose writings all the academies, all the journals, all the *salons*, all the theaters, all the people discussed—this one man advanced into the field for religious liberty, and by his immense influence and activity compelled the arrest of fanaticism by the same laws and the same tribunals which had thus far sanctioned it."

The younger Coquerel has given us the story of the Calas family—a story made familiar by Voltaire over all Europe. Calas was a devout Protestant, and a respectable merchant at Toulouse. One of his sons turned Roman Catholic; another was dissipated, a gambler, and a drunkard. The latter had threatened to renounce his faith for popery, but read books on suicide, and was at last discovered hung over a gate-way of his home. The father, broken by the infirmities of nearly seventy years, and incapable of even lifting the gigantic youth, who was more than six feet in height, was immediately accused by the Catholics of murdering his son to prevent his change of faith. His aged wife and his daughters were also implicated in the charge. The priests harangued their

people from the pulpits against the family; the monks said masses for the soul of the dead young man, and displayed a picture representing him as a martyr with a palm branch in his hand. The whole Catholic population of the city was excited to frenzy by the ecclesiastics, and the Protestants generally were accused of murdering their children when they showed a disposition to join the Catholics.

A Catholic magistrate prosecuted the case with relentless zeal, till the court condemned the old man to the "ordinary" and "extraordinary" torture, and then to be broken on the wheel, and at last consumed at the stake. Lacerated by the torture, the venerable man was driven in an open cart through the streets of the city, shoeless and clotheless, except his shirt, and was made to kneel on the pavement in front of the Catholic church. Thence he was carted again through the city to the place of execution. He met his frightful fate with meek heroism. Stretched on a cross, his limbs were broken in twelve places by an iron bar. At the first blow a single exclamation escaped him; the remainder he bore in silence. A mangled, quivering wreck of humanity, he was extended on the wheel, with his face upward, that he might, according to the atrocious sentence, thus "repent through whatever hours of life it might please God yet to give him." The stake meanwhile was ready by his side. During two hours he still suffered, when the

executioner strangled him, and, casting his mangled remains among the fagots, reduced them to ashes.

Such was the story with which Voltaire appalled Europe. He sent for the family of the Protestant martyr, and, protecting them under his own roof, learned the facts from their own lips. "He wept hot tears," says Pastor Gaberel, "and his frame trembled with emotion." He resolved to fight all the priestcraft of France; if need be, to obtain an *éclatante réhabilitation*—"a splendid rehabilitation"—of the heroic martyr. He corresponded with many of the sovereigns of Europe about it incessantly; he roused all his philosophic friends at Paris and elsewhere; he kept the journals ringing with it; he had friends at the court of Versailles who were not allowed to rest till they did their utmost; he reduced the evidence of the case to brief and pungent "Memoirs," which could not fail to be read with compassion and horror. Nearly four years he spent thus battling for toleration and liberty of conscience in the name of a private, a dead man.

At last the king was compelled to act; the court at Versailles ordered a revision of the case at Toulouse, over the ashes of the martyr, so to speak. The Church trembled for the result; it had found its match in a single man, whose pen in the right was mightier than all its crosiers and priests in the wrong. The judicial revision broke the sentence,

vindicated the innocence and honor of the father and his family, and stamped with the guilt of murder the fanaticism of the papists. The Catholic magistrate who had been most active in the persecution committed suicide. The king gave the widow 36,000 livres, and "France," says Pastor Gaberel, "received the greatest lesson in toleration that has ever struck the heart of a people." Voltaire afterward published an essay on religious liberty which fortified his victory.

The case of Calas was not yet finished when the pastors of Geneva brought to him another sufferer, Sirven, from a small town of Languedoc. His young daughter had been shut up in a nunnery by the authority of an official *lettre de cachet*, under pretense that she was inclined to be a Catholic. The sisters found her to be an intractable catechumen. She escaped at night, and, making her way homeward, fell into an unguarded well and was drowned. The Catholics accused her parents of murdering their child. The father and mother had to flee, for the yet undetermined case of their fellow-Protestants at Toulouse warned them. They made their way toward Geneva, but on the heights of the Cevennes the broken-hearted mother perished in the snows; the father reached the city of refuge. Voltaire "shuddered at the story of the physical torture and moral suffering of this afflicted man." As soon as the Calas case would allow him,

he undertook this new one with redoubled energy. Again all Europe rang with his remonstrances and denunciations. To the pastor, Moulton, who was his most intimate co-laborer in this and the Calas affair, he wrote: "I am sick, but I should die content with the hope of seeing toleration established; intolerance dishonors human nature; we have too long been below the Jews and Hottentots. I embrace you tenderly; come and pass a night at my house; let us converse more." The battle was again a long one, but Voltaire never wavered. At last he received private word from the President of the Parliament of Languedoc that the case was about concluded, and he wrote to Moulton: "It is no more doubtful that this family will be re-established in its honor and property, and that the infamous arrest which condemned it to death will be broken, like that of Calas. It required but two hours to condemn this virtuous family to death, but it has cost us nine years to obtain justice for them."

He next took in hand with equal vigor the case of the Chevalier de la Barre. One of those crucifixes which stud the highways of Catholic Europe was found mutilated on the bridge at Abbeville. A citizen, who was an enemy of the father of La Barre, sought evidence among the lowest people by which to accuse his son, who was but eighteen years old. The Bishop stirred up the popular

fanaticism by processions to the insulted crucifix, and at his instance La Barre and D'Étallonde, his companion, about the same age, were sentenced to have their tongues and right hands cut off, and then be burned alive. The sentence was changed by the Parliament of Paris to decapitation, which was inflicted on La Barre, but D'Étallonde escaped, and found shelter with Voltaire, who provided for his education, and induced Frederick of Prussia to appoint him lieutenant of engineers in his army. The evidence against these youths was altogether unreliable and quite frivolous. Voltaire was appealed to by the father of La Barre to vindicate the honor of his dead boy and of his family. "The letter," says Voltaire, "was such as to rend my heart." He was old and sick, and after his other contests needed rest, as he wrote to Moulton; but in the case of La Barre and his comrade "his tenacity," says Morley, "was still more heroic, more amazing, than in those of Calas and Sirven." Through twelve years he struggled for the rehabilitation of La Barre, and if he did not obtain a revision of the case from the court, he obtained it from the greater tribunal of the public opinion of all Europe.

These are not the only examples of his heroic devotion to humanity and tolerance. During most of the remainder of his life he was busy seeking redress for similar wrongs. The last one ended

only with his death. It was that of General Lally, who had lost the French dominion in India to England, and was executed at Paris—a sacrifice to party policy, a parallel of the sacrifice of Byng in England. Voltaire struggled down to his eighty-fifth year, along with Lally's son, for a revision of the trial and a reversion of the sentence. The news of his success came to him when he was on his death-bed. Five days before he expired he wrote his last letter; it was to Lally's son. "Dying I revive," he said, "at this great news. I embrace you tenderly. I die content." Even Bungener relents over this letter, though not without an invidious reflection. "One likes," he says, "to allow himself to be moved at the death-bed of Voltaire by these evidently sincere words. But the affair was not the less commenced with an indignation which he never felt." Lord Brougham (*Voltaire et Rousseau*) is more generous. "While blaming his errors, so grave and so constant," says Brougham, "we must admit, nevertheless, that it would be thrusting injustice and ingratitude very far to forget for a moment the immense services rendered to the world by Voltaire; a lasting glory is due to him for that war, so long and so persevering, which he sustained against tyranny of the most odious form, against the persecution of opinions and the violation of the sacred right of human reason. To no writer since Luther does

the spirit of free inquiry owe equal gratitude; none has done more to deliver human intelligence from ecclesiastical tyranny."

Morley claims special honor for him as the first great modern writer who represented the "Peace," or rather the Anti-war, doctrine. He regarded war as consummate folly, a relic of barbarism; and bravely disdained the ridicule wherewith "practical" men, so called, treated the advocates of better methods for settling international disputes. It was he that ironically, but logically, proposed that the States of Europe should import armies of monkeys from Africa, and train these imitative brutes to take the field, and decide the quarrels of kings. This he deemed a more reasonable as well as a more economical way of solving the political and ethical problem usually involved in international quarrels, than the barbarous custom of blowing out the brains of hundreds of thousands of rational beings—citizens, husbands, and fathers.

In 1778, Voltaire, after an absence from Paris of nearly thirty years, left Ferney for the brilliant metropolis, which during all his exile he had kept vividly excited by his writings, and where he was to be received with ovations such as have hardly had a parallel in literary history. He thus passes from the purview of our essay, which is limited to his life on the Swiss frontier.

What can we, finally, say of such a man? Much that is good, as our pages show, but more that is bad. Hardly any literary character has been treated with less impartiality. His friendly critics have too much palliated his faults; Morley, one of the most candid, is not altogether an exception. His hostile critics have been generally perversely blind to what was really commendable in his character and services; nearly every page of Bungener's elaborate volumes is saturated with prejudice, worse, if possible, than the *odium theologicum*.

Voltaire was a born humorist. His first view of any subject was its ludicrous side, if it had any; and if it had none, its very gravity or solemnity seemed to evoke his innate humor.

He appeared incapable of the sentiment of reverence; all religions were to him but superstitions, morbid excesses of the mind. Born a Roman Catholic, educated by the Jesuits, and habitually in contact with Popery, he always confounded Christianity with it. The Genevan pastors found it impossible to make him discriminate between Romanism and their Protestantism.

He was thoroughly unscrupulous. Carlyle shows that in his fracases at Berlin he could not only indulge in downright falsehoods, but swear to them. He was saved from heedless perjury only by the excessive politeness of a magistrate in foregoing the oath. If craniology teaches that the conscience

has a local organ in the brain, the skull of Voltaire must have shown a cavity rather than a boss over the place of that faculty. He habitually played off falsehoods on the Genevan magistrates and the "venerable company of pastors." He constantly disowned his most flagrant publications, and sometimes affected fiercely to denounce them.

Meanwhile he was not without generous qualities, as we have seen. He had a quick sympathy for all human sufferings. He was liberal with his money. He made gallant fight against superstition, and did more than any other man of the eighteenth century to break down intolerance in Europe. No such judicial flagrancies as he grappled with have been permitted in France since his day. He opposed Christianity, but as decidedly opposed the atheism that prevailed among his philosophical friends in Paris.

The leader, if not the originator, of the so-called philosophy of the time, he had not a single attribute of the philosophic character. He laughed at its dignities or severities. He had no system of his own, but was content with Newton in physics and Locke in metaphysics. He familiarized these great Englishmen on the Continent. His supreme idea was the emancipation of the human race by the advancement of its intelligence; the supreme difficulty of the task, as he believed, lay in traditional religions. His method against these was

historical criticism and sarcastic humor. He denounced the writings of D'Olbach, Helvetius, and his other speculative atheistic friends at Paris; and insisted that his fellow-encyclopedists should shun metaphysics, and deal exclusively in positive facts and humorous satire. Nothing but truth can stand ridicule; Voltaire knew well the fact, however egregiously he misapplied it.

To estimate adequately his character, the facts of nearly two-thirds of his life, antecedent to the beginning of our sketch, must be given, and many of them could not decorously appear in a decent publication. Even in this age of the rehabilitation of notable characters—of Mohammed, of Cromwell, of Mary Queen of Scots, of Spinoza, and of Lucrezia Borgia—it is inconceivable that Voltaire can be effectively rehabilitated. His most partial disciples must abandon that hope; but meanwhile they can claim for him many brilliant and many salutary things. They can assert his sympathy with suffering men, his pecuniary charity, his indomitable courage against the occupants of the high places of Church and State, in the conflict for toleration and religious liberty. They can claim for him high rank, almost sovereign rank, take him all in all, as a *littérateur;* they can assert that no man ever made the pen a more effective power; that he was, as Morley says, the "very genius of correctness, elegance, and grace" in style; that

he was the greatest satirist of his age, the founder of the modern school of historical writing; that he ranks next to Corneille and Racine in French tragedy, though—odd fact for the greatest humorist of his time—he failed in comedy; that in his twenty-eight tragedies are some of the best passages of French literature, though his dozen or more comedies place him in no proximity whatever to Molière. Above all these merits, infinitely above them, they can claim that he introduced a new era—the era of toleration—in France, which, with whatever occasional oscillations, has continued to advance, and by which the ecclesiastical oppressions and judicial atrocities of his own day have passed away, where the creeds of Protestants and even of Jews are now recognized, protected, and salaried as parts of the national religion. They put forth still larger claims for him, but with less concession from Christian critics—that he led the way in the emancipation of the intellectual classes of France, and indeed of Europe generally, from Roman traditions and bigotry—an emancipation which continues and grows in spite of the sacrifice, by the priesthood, of Bossuet's "Gallic Liberties," and which, while, as natural in such reactions, it has gone to the opposite skeptical extreme, will, it is hoped, show in time the equally natural reaction toward salutary religious principles. And finally they may claim that he was a chief agent in bringing on the first

French Revolution, a movement that, in spite of its stupendous enormities, is now recognized by historical critics as the epoch of modern European history, and is still developing beneficial, immeasurable results. His writings afforded not a single sanction of the atrocities which attended that great event. And, indeed, if the philosophers who brought it on are negatively responsible for its crimes by failing to provide the necessary moral preventions, the ruling and ecclesiastical classes were positively responsible for them by the benighted, the demoralized, condition to which they had reduced the people. But on these last two claims of Voltaire's friendly critics we cannot enlarge; they would require too much qualification. We must here take leave of him, with no little respect for his abilities and with as much regret for his faults.

While he yet lived, a devoted Protestant, Madame Necker—the daughter of a Protestant pastor, wife of the first Protestant in the Royal Cabinet of France, and mother of Madame de Staël—projected a public subscription for a statue in commemoration of his services to their cause, and thus gave to Europe its best artistic representation of the veteran author. A Protestant writer, reprobating his errors while appreciating his services, may well share her Christian charity and Protestant gratitude.

VII.

CHANNING—HERESY AND REFORM.

I AM sick of opinions; I am weary to hear them; my soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion, give me a humble, gentle lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good faith, without partiality and without hypocrisy; a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love. Let my soul be with these Christians, wheresoever they are, and whatsoever opinion they are of." Let not the scrupulous reader be alarmed at this liberalism; these are not the words of the heresiarch, William Ellery Channing. They were written by one "John Wesley, late fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford." But we venture the opinion, that, had John Wesley known personally William Ellery Channing, he would have drawn his portrait with such lines as those we cite. Southey has a paragraph on what he calls "Wesley's Perfect Charity," in which the poet affirms that Wesley "judged kindly of the Romanists, and of heretics of every description, wherever a Christian disposition and a virtuous life were found;" and that "he published the lives of several Catholics and one

Socinian, for the edification of his followers." This Socinian was the "good man" Thomas Firmin. Wesley, in his prefatory remarks to the memoir, says: "I was exceedingly struck at reading the following life, having long settled it in my mind that the entertaining wrong notions concerning the Trinity was inconsistent with real piety. But I cannot argue against matter of fact. I dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous."

This "pious man," Thomas Firmin, was, we repeat, a Socinian; William Ellery Channing was what all orthodox believers will admit to be much better: he was an Arian, a "high Arian;" but, more than this, he was a man of purest sincerity, of profound humility, and universal charity. Channing must be admitted, in fact, to have been either a hypocrite or a saint, and the man who, after a personal acquaintance with him, or the reading of his works and biography, is disposed to say he was a hypocrite, may be assured that he is not unfitted to be one himself. We have but little interest in Channing's "Theology;" we deeply regret that the reproach of heresy counteracts, to a great extent, the due influence of his noble writings—writings which, notwithstanding his dogmatic opinions, exhibit powerfully the real genius of Christianity, and. in their application of its ethical principles to the social progress

of man, anticipate the better ages to come more, perhaps, than any other literary productions of our century. It is a delicate task, then, to which we sit down—that of drawing honestly the portrait of a great and good man, against whom the theological opinions of most of our readers so strongly predispose them; but we shall proceed in the attempt with determined frankness.

The events needing chronological note in Channing's life are few, and it is not important to our present design to narrate them fully. He was born at Newport, Rhode Island, April 7, 1780; entered Harvard University in his fourteenth year; graduated at the age of eighteen; spent a part of the two ensuing years as a private tutor in Richmond, Virginia; returned to Cambridge, as Regent—a subordinate office—in 1801; was settled as pastor of Federal-street Church, Boston, in June, 1803; visited Europe in 1822; began his celebrated essays on Milton, Napoleon, and Fénelon, which distinguish the commencement of his literary career proper in 1826; visited the West Indies in 1830; commenced his antislavery labors in 1835; and died, October 2, 1842.

To the American public in general, Channing is chiefly known as an Arian theologian; while, on the other side of the Atlantic, where his writings are more current and better appreciated, his fame is chiefly that of a literary man and a philanthropist.

The common impression that he was the leader of the Unitarian movement in this country is false. By the publication of his celebrated sermon at the ordination of Mr. Sparks, in Baltimore, in 1819, the doctrinal position of Unitarianism was more generally made known in the American community than at any former date. By this accident, and still more, perhaps, by the fact that his literary reputation elevated him above all others engaged in the movement, he became recognized as its head, although it could boast of earlier advocates and abler polemics. "The Baltimore discourse gave its author," says a Unitarian organ, "the name of leader and head of the Unitarian denomination in this country, although we had far more accomplished theologians; and no individual was farther from claiming any authority in matters of opinion. He was never the apostle of a doctrine or a sect."*

At the crisis of the secession of Unitarianism from Calvinistic Congregationalism, or rather the secession of the latter from Unitarianism, he was somewhat active in the controversy; but not so much in defense of liberal theology as of liberal rights. The reader of his memoirs and his articles in the "Christian Disciple," the Unitarian organ of those times, cannot fail to see that he exerted himself, not so much to vindicate the new opinions of the period, as the right of his brethren to

* "Christian Examiner," for September, 1848.

cuss them without ecclesiastical proscription; a right certainly unquestionable under the Congregational *régime* of the New England Churches. He says himself: "It was not so much for the purpose of defending the opinions, as of encouraging fellow-Christians to use their own minds, and to examine freely the doctrines of religion, that I entered the field of controversy. I felt then what I now more deeply feel, that the human mind is to make progress by freedom, by the deliberate, impartial, and independent exercise of its faculties."

It was, in fact, that regard for individual liberty of thought which was the passion, the moral idiosyncrasy, of the man—the source alike of its chief excellencies and its chief errors—that led him into the polemical arena; and when he had manfully defended the liberty of the mind, he paused but little to dabble in the subordinate questions, but gave his energies to more spiritual and practical interests. As late as 1841 he says: "I do not speak as a Unitarian, but as an independent Christian. I have little or no interest in Unitarians as a sect. I have hardly any thing to do with them. I can endure no sectarian bonds."

What were Channing's theological opinions? To say he was a Unitarian, in the etymological sense of the word, would be just, and so it would be, in a measure, to say the same of John Calvin, or John Wesley; to say he was a Unitarian, in the denom-

inational use of the word at present in New England, would be very vague; for what is more vague than the existing theology of New England Unitarianism? He obtained an accidental prominence in the Unitarian movement; but we believe that the impartial theological critic would classify him most readily with Locke, Samuel Clarke, Watts, and similar thinkers, and extend to him the charity with which the tenets of these great and good men have been regarded. He expressly placed himself in the rank of Dr. Watts, and disclaimed the views of Priestley, Belsham, and Socinians generally. The later liberalism of Unitarianism—invalidating the sacred canon, denying the miracles, the superhuman character of Christ, redemption by him, future retribution, etc., he did not share; and to his exemption from these speculative negations we attribute the superior spirituality, nay, we are compelled to say the holiness, which was the very temper of his being, and will render him, in the estimation of the more impartial future, such an anomaly among Unitarians as Fénelon was among Romanists. His biographer declares: "The fact undeniable was, that while he formed the most free and generous estimate of human nature, he held opinions in regard to the divine government, spiritual influences, a mediator, and the kingdom of heaven, which, by most liberal Christians, would be considered rather mystical than rational."

His views of the character of Christ are indeterminate, but full of reverence and love: "God has given his own Son," he says, "a being respecting whose nature, perhaps, revelation communicates no precise ideas, but whom we are yet taught to view as sustaining a peculiar relation to the infinite Father, and peculiarly beloved by him. Jesus Christ is the Son of God in a peculiar sense; the temple of the Divinity; the brightest image of his glory. In seeing him we see the Father. . . . We hear him claiming the honors of the Son of God, of the promised Messiah, of the Saviour of the world. We not only hear him assenting to the question, 'Art thou the Christ?' but adding to his assent a declaration of his glory, which he must have known would have been peculiarly offensive to the Jews, and applying to himself language which, under the old dispensation, had been limited to God—thus expressing his intimate union with the Father. According to these Scriptures, Jesus Christ is not a teacher whose agency was chiefly confined to the time when he was on earth. He ever lives, and is ever active for mankind. He sustains other offices than those of teacher; he is Mediator, Intercessor, Lord, and Saviour. He has a permanent and constant connection with mankind, and a most intimate union with his Church."

While he dissented from the precise definitions of the atonement usually given by orthodox writers,

and, as in his celebrated "New York Sermon," assailed them with more rhetoric than logic, he nevertheless believed in redemption through Christ. He gives the following statement of the opinions of himself and some of his associates: "We agreed, in our last conference, that a majority of our brethren believe that Jesus Christ is more than a man; that he existed before the world; that he literally came from heaven to save our race; that he sustains other offices than those of a teacher and witness to the truth; and that he still acts for our benefit, and is our intercessor with the Father. This we agreed to be the prevalent sentiment of our brethren. With respect to the Atonement, the great body of liberal Christians seem to me to accord precisely with the author of 'Bible News,' [Noah Worcester,] or rather, both agree very much with the profound Butler. Both agree that Jesus Christ, by his sufferings and intercession, obtains forgiveness for sinful men; or that, on account, or in consequence, of what Christ has done and suffered, the punishment of sin is averted from the penitent, and blessings, forfeited by sin, are bestowed. The doctrine of the Atonement, taken in the broad sense which I have before stated, is not rejected by Unitarians."

This statement is, however, qualified by an emphatic denial that "the ever-blessed God suffered and died on the cross;" a denial which most theo-

logians would make with equal emphasis. On this profoundest of all subjects, it must be admitted, in the language of a foreign journal, "that, though he believed, in some mysterious way which is not explained, that Jesus came to save the world; that he himself, if saved at all, was to be so through the mediation and intercession of the Redeemer;" yet his position here was "not so clear and defined as that taken by him on questions of infinitely less importance to himself and to others, on almost every other question to which he had turned his attention." * Still we believe he so far comprehended, and, above all, relied upon the mediatorial office of our Lord, as to experience its efficacy in his own soul. Christ was the ever-recurring theme of his writings. Christ's teachings, his example, his mediation—whatever mystery might encompass it—were to him the only hope of the world, not only of its purely religious interests, but of its social and political, its temporal and eternal destinies. He never refers to the subject of Christ's character, apart from sectarian disputation, without kindling with ardor; and if to be imbued with the meekness and love of Christ is the mark of true discipleship, then assuredly this great man was a Christian.

Channing believed in regeneration, though, with many theological writers, he held that it is usually a gradual experience. His language is often quite as

* Tait's Edinburgh Magazine.

strong on this subject as the customary statements of evangelical authors: "A religious character, then, is an acquisition," he says, "and implies a change; a change which requires labor and prayer; aid and strength from Heaven; a change so great and important that it deserves to be called a *new birth*. The Christian is a new man. By the precepts, doctrines, motives, promises of Christianity, and by the secret influences of God's spirit on the heart, he has been raised to a faith, hope, and love which may be called a new life. He has been born again."

While at Richmond, surrounded by irreligion and immorality, he believed himself the subject of this inward change. He wrote to his uncle: "I believe that I never experienced that change of heart which is necessary to constitute a Christian till within a few months past. The worldling would laugh at me he would call conversion a farce. But the man who has felt the influences of the Holy Spirit can oppose fact and experience to empty declamation and contemptuous sneers. You remember the language of the blind man whom Jesus healed: 'This I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.' Such is the language which the real Christian may truly utter. Once, and not long ago, I was blind—blind to my own condition, blind to the goodness of God, and blind to the love of my Redeemer. Now I behold, with shame and confusion, the depravity and

rottenness of my heart. Now I behold, with love and admiration, the long-suffering and infinite benevolence of Deity. All my sentiments and affections have lately changed. I once considered mere moral attainments as the only object I had to pursue. I have now solemnly given myself up to God. I consider supreme love to Him as the first of all duties, and morality seems but a branch from the vigorous root of religion. I love mankind, because they are the children of God. I practice temperance and strive for purity of heart, that I may become a temple for his Holy Spirit to dwell in."

He was some time, however, advancing toward this point of his spiritual progress. Years prior to it, he had been awakened to an interest in religion during a religious revival in New London, where he was preparing for college in the family of his uncle; while at Cambridge he made some progress, and determined to devote himself to the Christian ministry; but at Richmond he emerged into clearer light; though, as he afterward insisted, his conversion was a life-long process. When questioned by a good Calvinist whether he had not been converted at some time, he replied, "I would say not, unless the whole of my life may be called, as it truly has been, a *process* of conversion." To which his orthodox friend unhesitatingly answered, "Then, friend Channing, you were born regenerated; for you certainly are now a child of God."

His later references to his experiences at Richmond are very touching. The death of his father had reduced the resources of his family, and compelled him to accept the office of a private tutor in that city. Infidelity and iniquity prevailed around him: "I lived alone, too poor to buy books, spending my days and nights in an out-building, with no one beneath my roof except during the hours of school-keeping. There I toiled as I have never toiled since; for gradually my constitution sank under the unremitting exertion. With not a human being to whom I could communicate my deepest thoughts and feeling, and shrinking from common society, I passed through intellectual and moral conflicts, through excitements of heart and mind, so absorbing as often to banish sleep and to destroy almost wholly the power of digestion. I was worn well-nigh to a skeleton. Yet I look back on those days and nights of loneliness and frequent gloom with thankfulness. If I ever struggled with my whole soul for purity, truth, and goodness, it was there. There, amid sore trials, the great question, I trust, was settled within me, whether I would obey the higher or lower principles of my nature—whether I would be the victim of passion, the world, or the free child and servant of God. . . . In a licentious, intemperate city, one spirit, at least, was preparing, in silence and loneliness, to toil, not wholly in vain, for truth and holiness."

Were it not for his studied avoidance of the usual theological technics, and the peculiarity of his modes of thought, the descriptions of spiritual life which are scattered through Channing's writings befit the pages of Jeremy Taylor or of William Law; the latter was indeed his favorite practical writer, as he had been Wesley's during his early life. Supreme love of God was to him the central element of religion; he dwelt upon it with the fervor and absolute emphasis of Fénelon; and verged upon, if he did not actually adopt, the doctrine of Disinterestedness, as taught by Hopkins, whose ministry he occasionally attended in Newport. The cold and lifeless didactics, usual to Socinianism, never entered into his ministrations; if he did not distinguish morality from religion, it was not because he reduced the latter to the former, but because he exalted the former to the latter—basing morals on piety. There is, indeed, throughout his writings that meek but fervid spirituality which has always been the common trait of sanctified minds; whether of Fénelon among Romanists, Edwards among Calvinists, or Fletcher of Madeley among Arminians—a mark of essential identity in spirit, notwithstanding their variance in matters of opinion and form.

It was this evangelical temper, together with his abstinence from polemical strife, that produced, in the latter part of his life, the report that he had

essentially modified, if not abandoned, his earlier opinions. His biographer takes special care to guard his reputation against this suspicion; we are convinced that he died, as he had lived, a high Arian; but believe, at the same time, that he perceived, in his maturer years, the indefiniteness of most of his theological opinions, and lost, proportionately, his tenacity for them. In these later years he never obtruded them. There was a rich ripening of his religious character as he approached the end of his life; but on many of the topics of former and ardent controversy he spoke with cautious misgivings; he had become convinced of their difficulty, and waived them; had become anxious to settle down into spiritual repose, performing the evident duties and cherishing the consoling affections and hopes of the Gospel. We mention this fact not so much as a detraction from his opinions, as a beautiful aspect of his later history; one not uncommon to good men in the ripeness of their years and piety, whatever may have been the earlier severities of their prejudices. In 1841, about a year before his death, he wrote: "I am more detached from a denomination, and strive to feel more my connection with the universal Church, with all good and holy men. I am little of a Unitarian, have little sympathy with the system of Priestley and Belsham, and stand aloof from all but those who strive and pray for clearer

light, who look for a purer and more effectual manifestation of Christian truth."

Of Unitarianism, as a system or movement, he unquestionably did not feel satisfied in his later years. In 1837 he wrote: "I feel that among liberal Christians the preaching has been too vague, has wanted unity, has scattered attention too much." In 1839 he thus expresses himself: "I would that I could look to Unitarianism with more hope. But this system was, at its recent revival, a protest of the understanding against absurd dogmas, rather than the work of deep religious principle; it was early paralyzed by the mixture of a material philosophy, and fell too much into the hands of scholars and political reformers; the consequence is, a want of vitality and force, which gives us but little hope of its accomplishing much under its present auspices, or in its present form."

Channing was remarkable, as a theologian, for the amenity of his spirit. There was but one class of opinions which he ever assailed with much severity. His hostility to Calvinism was absolute; he turned away with instinctive horror from its doctrines. He declared that he could not hear them "without shuddering," and they appeared to him "more dishonorable to the universal Father than any error born in the darkness of Popery."

Channing's peculiarities—his excellences and his faults as a theologian—are mostly referable to two

causes, namely, his extreme opinion of the individual right of free thought, and that general and moral sort of logic, if we may so call it, which was the characteristic habit of his mind.

Liberty of thought, especially in matters of religion, was to him the most sacred right of humanity; he seldom refers to it in his writings without catching from the subject a higher inspiration and a nobler style. It was the passion of the man, born in him, and glowing with unabated ardor, through all his struggles and misgivings of opinion, through the retrospections of his advanced years—so often chillingly corrective of the sentiments of men of genius—and through the last labors of his life. It was the chief motive which induced him, as we have seen, to take an active part in the Unitarian controversy; it was the strongest reason of his invincible abhorrence of slavery; it led him several times to defend publicly the press, when he admitted that its liberty was perniciously used; it caused him to place his name the first on a petition for the liberation of Kneeland, when imprisoned for public blasphemies. From the time, indeed, that he entered the pulpit, a youth of twenty-three years, till he descended into the grave, he uttered an uncompromising remonstrance against all restrictions on the liberty of the human soul. Honor to his memory for it, notwithstanding his heresies in this, as in other respects! Differing from him,

as we do, in theology, we cannot but admit his admirable and almost singular peculiarity in this respect. Theologians and sectarians have been enthusiastic enough for liberty of conscience when deprived of it, but have generally deemed it more orthodox to arrogate it to themselves than to extend it to their competitors. Channing demanded it for all men, and gave it as liberally as he claimed it.

He did not err in asserting this right, but in defining it. It is undoubtedly a delicate question how far a man should doubt received opinions till he can prove their truth. There are two considerations, however, which show that a habit of faith in received opinions is more legitimate than a habit of doubt. One is, the unquestionable inability of the mass of mankind, from the want of time or of intelligence, to ascertain the evidence of most opinions. The other is the fact that, as an adaptation to this condition, we are placed in circumstances during childhood and youth which inevitably educate us to such a reliance on received doctrines. The Philosophers may be Pyrrhonists—the people cannot be; it would be contrary to nature for them to be skeptical. The millions are compelled by a necessity as absolute as fate to adopt most of their opinions on the higher questions of truth from tradition or from testimony. We are not sure, indeed, that there is not, above the necessity and the train-

ing referred to, a natural law or instinct for the same end. Let us not, then, speak too harshly of the "prejudices of education," the servility of the popular mind; much of the orderly beauty of social life, of the reverence and loyalty which protect the sacredness of public institutions, and of the restraining influence of religious sentiments on individual conduct, is due to that generous confidence in the testimony of the past and in the testimony of our fellows which it is the too-prevalent custom of these times to decry. Let us have liberty; in God's name let the millions have it; but they are the enemies of men, as of God, who teach that the moderation which is essential to true wisdom, and the faith that God has wrought into our nature, are to be defiantly put away in the struggle for human emancipation.

Channing would never so teach; but there was an habitual tendency in him to such an extreme, and it is manifest throughout his writings. In his youth he would not read theological writers till he had made up his own opinions, lest he might be wrongly prepossessed—a rule which, however plausible, requires much qualification; for it is certainly no small stretch of presumption in a young man to suppose his immature powers, biased, too, as they inevitably must be, by the prejudices of early education, can ascertain religious truth, whether from revelation or reason, better than the mature facul-

ties of the Butlers, Watsons, or Chalmerses, who stand ready to help him. Channing condemned the opinions of Parker, of Boston; and yet applauded the freedom with which they were uttered —as if there were no prudential restrictions to be self-imposed on the popular publication of one's opinions when they are confessedly of a recondite character, are but in the process of their discovery, and, if they should happen to be false, must be disastrous to the best sentiments of the people. Is it really the wisdom of a high philosophy to proclaim, as from the house-tops, opinions which would break down the most venerated traditions and institutions of society, and to do so while, from their immaturity, such new opinions are yet subject to constant revision and modification by their authors? Is, indeed, that peremptory rashness, falsely called courage, with which new doctrines are announced in these days, preferable to the modesty which gave to the Socratic method the interrogative form, and the want of which, in the Sophists, called forth the remonstrance of Plato and his great master?

This love of individual freedom induced Channing to eschew almost entirely the combinations of good men, for good purposes, by which so much has been achieved in these latter days. He would preach eloquently on temperance; and, with his distinguished classmate, Judge Story, adopted total abstinence while yet in college; but he would not

sign the pledge. He preached against War, and the Peace Society published his sermon; but he refused to join their organization. He wrote against slavery, and the Antislavery Society issued his books; but he never united with them. Individualism was his hobby; but suppose all the strong men who conduct our philanthropic societies should ride the same hobby, what would become of our best schemes of reform?

Channing, to say the least, was vague on this subject, as he was on most others. With his fine genius, and finer *morale*, the extreme freedom of opinion which he asserted was somewhat guarded against its natural results; but in many of his compeers it proved disastrous. It led Parker to utter Rationalism; Emerson to ideal Pantheism; Brownson, through we know not how many theological somersets, till he came at last, head downward, into the mire of Popery; and J. Blanco White, Channing's correspondent and ideal of a self-emancipated mind, it conducted into inextricable mazes of doubt and despondence.

We have mentioned, as a second characteristic of Channing, "a general or moral sort of logic," which, we think, was the master-power of his mind, the chief source at once of the excellencies and defects of his opinions. Probable reasoning, as well as mathematical, proceeds upon certain original, or, as they are more commonly called,

ultimate truths, which are incapable of proof, and need no proof, because the very constitution of the mind compels their recognition. The axioms of mathematics are of no more practical authority than are the original conditions of moral belief, when the latter have fair play; but the difference which exists between the respective *processes* of mathematical and probable reasoning extends also to the original conditions of the two kinds of proof. Every man admits, instantly, that the sum of all the parts is equal to the whole; every man admits, too, the conclusions of probable reasoning at a certain point of evidence, and would stake his all upon them, as fearlessly as upon a conclusion deduced from mathematical axioms. But the difference is, that different men require different degrees of moral evidence to bring them to the same conclusion; and this arises from a difference in the strength of the original principles of moral reasoning in different minds. Some men—and not unfrequently men of superior faculties—seem constitutionally inclined to skepticism; others, without rare astuteness, have, nevertheless, a happy and healthful appreciation of moral evidence—a sound faith in all things good and true—without fanaticism.

This difference, respecting probable reasoning in general, becomes still more strongly marked when the subjects of such reasoning are of a purely

speculative character. In fine, the original grounds of probable reasoning, though as constitutional in the mind as those of mathematical proof, are, unlike the latter, dependent for their force and vividness upon the moral idiosyncrasies of the man. And we mean something special by this phrase: we do not mean any superinduced moral state—though this doubtless has great effect—but an original aptitude for right moral conclusions. Men of devout minds have sometimes approved barbarous evils, while others, of no special piety and no better external lights, have seen their true character and denounced them. The Demon of Socrates was his fine moral discernment.

What we mean, then, by Channing's peculiarity in this respect is, that he possessed this aptitude in a degree which we are disposed to pronounce anomalous. Our supposition of what a man would have been under other circumstances must, of course, be quite conjectural; but we cannot place Channing down on the moral level of any age in which we may suppose him to have lived. If he had lived in a period of barbarous heathenism, his warm sensibility could not have led him into its fanaticism, for the philosophic element was too strong in him for that. If he had lived in an age of brilliant pagan civilization, like that of Athens, he could not have been a Pyrrhonist, for his fine perceptions would not have admitted it. It is a strong

statement, but we should not hesitate to make it to one who had studied him, either personally or in his writings, that, if he had lived under the latter circumstances, he would, most probably, have been the friend of Socrates and Plato, and have combined the ethical wisdom of the one with the pure idealism of the other. Such a man as Channing must have stood majestically in advance of his age, whenever and wherever he lived. He lived, according to the sense of the present generation at least, in the best age of the world, and yet was far in front of it; if it reaches his elevated position in two centuries the signs of the times are certainly quite illusive.

This fine faculty for moral discrimination seemed almost an instinct in Channing; he appeared to *feel* the right or wrong of a subject at once. On all great moral and social questions—the inherent rights of man, freedom of the press, war, popular ameliorations, education, penal jurisprudence, the ethical and spiritual principles of religion, and, above all, the moral traits of personal character—he had an intuitive insight. Error, however sanctioned by great names or great age, shrank instantaneously beneath his scrutiny. Seldom, if ever, did a man rise more sublimely above the influence of tradition, or that factitious deference for what is fashionable, customary, though wrong, which so much sways the world. Though a meek, calm

man, fit for the goodly company of Izaak Walton's mild-tempered worthies, yet there was in his moral convictions a keenness and sternness truly terrible to evil and to evil-doers. The long-drawn reasonings with which ordinary minds would arraign prevailing wrongs were beneath him; he saw such wrongs so distinctly, and pointed at them so directly, that the hearer, however previously beguiled by them, could not but see them standing out, staring and indefensible. His very tones, though habitually gentle, had a sort of moral thrill in them when attacking error, that gave a new sense and an overwhelming power to common-place sentences. His biographer relates a fact in point, but which cannot be fully comprehended by any reader who never heard Channing. A discussion arose, in conversation, on the barbarous modes of punishment in the Navy, Army, and Prisons. One of the company was going through the usual arguments in favor of the lash, when Channing dashed the whole, and silenced all further defence by a single exclamation. "What," said he, "*strike a* MAN!" To such an exclamation his peculiar manner gave a volume of meaning; the barbarity of the custom, the petty and vulgar character of the reasoning for it, stood out in debasing contrast with the moral dignity of man.

Now it was in precisely this noble faculty for the discernment of general ethical truth that we think

his theological errors originated. He was so addicted to moral reasoning, to practical views of every thing, that he was measurably disqualified for the more abstract or speculative questions of theology; and, therefore, whenever he approached them he became perplexed, doubtful, indefinite. Minds strongly given to moral reasoning are said to be unapt in mathematics, and *vice versa;* the higher truths of revelation, not within the scope of direct moral reasoning—as the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance—are dependent almost entirely on *exegetical* proof; and in this respect are nearly as much out of the habitual course of a mind like Channing's as mathematical questions themselves. Channing never could be a profound mathematician; and he never was a good exegetical critic. He applied his general logic directly to these high revealed truths, on which it was scarcely possible for it to find a foothold; whereas he should have applied it to the evidence of the Revelation itself, and, when satisfied there, he should have relied for the truths which the Revelation announced, on the just principles of interpretation, chiefly, if not exclusively. The reader of his sermons cannot fail to observe how seldom he discusses the Scripture argument on any doubtful subject; his noted New York Sermon is strictly a "moral argument" on the Trinity, etc., as exclusively such as his well-known "Moral Argument against Calvinism."

Here was the capital mistake of his theological inquiries—the wrong application of reason to matters of Revelation; if we can prove the Scriptures to be the word of God, what folly for us to demand that the mystery of their revelations respecting the Divine essence, or other incomprehensible facts, shall give way before our logic!

We have dwelt thus largely on Channing's character as a theologian for two reasons: first, because we are honestly solicitous to allay any undue prejudice which may exist against him in other religious communions than his own; and, secondly, because, religion being the study and business of his life, the contemplation of him in this character ought to afford us the best means of estimating him.

As a preacher, Channing was pre-eminent, though he had very few really oratorical qualities. His presence in the pulpit was not commanding; he was small in stature, exceedingly emaciated, and enveloped in a superabundance of clothing; his cheeks were sunken; his eye hollow, and his voice feeble, though remarkably flexible. The deeply indented lines of his face, especially about the mouth, gave him a peculiar expression, which could not fail to enlist the sympathy of the hearer; you could read in them the story of his long physical prostration, and the agony of those early intellectual struggles which had occasioned it. This trace of the struggle of the past was, how-

ever, so blended with an expression of present and profound repose as to be, to our eye at least, the most impressive and affecting indication of his countenance. His forehead, always marked by a single fallen lock, was not large, but appeared so by contrast with the diminished proportions of his thin and pallid face. He had few gestures, and adhered closely to his manuscript, except in the rural chapel, near his summer residence on Rhode Island, where he usually extemporized, and, it is said, with much facility. We have heard him speak extemporaneously in a popular meeting with the same rich thought and diction that characterized his pulpit prelections.

But whatever were his personal disadvantages in the pulpit, they were not only countervailed by, but seemed to assist, the impression of his discourse. His feeble utterance—a little prolonged, but not drawling—became richly varied in its modulation, and seemed congenial with the refined excellence of his thoughts. In the reading of the hymns and the Scripture lessons it at once arrested attention by its exact and eloquent emphasis. As he advanced in his discourse, his deep gray eye beamed with a calm radiance, and, before he sunk exhausted on his seat, a blended intellectual and moral beauty glowed over all his features.

He was seldom passionate, never declamatory, yet always deeply earnest. His utter sincerity

would not admit of an attempt at mere rhetorical effect. "On no account," he once said to a young brother preacher, "on no account, in your public services, try to exhibit, by look or tone, any emotion which you do not feel. If you feel coldly, appear so. The sermon may be lost, but your own truthfulness will be preserved." This sincerity was manifest not only in the delivery, but also in the preparation, of his sermons; beauty, both of thought and style, was natural to him; he could not write without it; but he aimed at effect only by the moral force of his thoughts—truth, in its own essential beauty and inherent power, was his whole dependence in the pulpit. Had he used a brilliant sentence, or a beautiful figure, evidently because of its rhetorical finish, it would have startled his audience as an inadmissible incongruity—a sort of degradation from the lofty dignity of his earnest spirit. Figures are abundant in his writings, but they come spontaneously and are used only so far as they are relevant for the illustration of his subject: they appear mostly as allusions; and he habitually declines to elaborate or detail them merely to bring out their rhetorical beauty. We doubt whether half a dozen exceptions to this remark can be found in all his writings. He possessed deep sensibility, and you felt often under his discourses that you were wholly in his power; that it was only with him to will to overwhelm you, and he could

do it; but he appeared to hold his feelings under determined yet difficult restraint; his ever-varying voice would often tremble with emotion, and suddenly seize another tone. We doubt whether he ever wept in the pulpit; but his hearers have often found it impossible to imitate his self-restraint, and have wept under his most tranquil accents. Dr. Dewey says: "I shall never forget the effect upon me of the first sermon I ever heard from him. Shall I confess, too, that, holding then a faith somewhat different from his, I listened to him with a certain degree of distrust and prejudice? These barriers, however, soon gave way; and such was the effect of the simple and heart-touching truths and tones which fell from his lips, that it would have been a relief to me to have bowed my head, and to have wept without restraint through the whole service. And yet I did not weep; for there was something in that impression too solemn and deep for tears."

Channing was, throughout his long ministry, the most popular preacher in Boston. He began in youth with crowded congregations, and his latest sermons, when it was publicly known that he was to preach, commanded the same interest. Two qualities particularly marked his discourses, and were, we think, the constituents of his pulpit power. The first was that elevated tone of not only his moral emotions, but of his moral conceptions,

whereto we have alluded. You heard from him discussions of old familiar truths; but they became new in his hands, not so much by far-fetched or novel opinions upon them, as by a new life which he infused into admitted opinions. Your old thoughts rise up within you in radiant resurrection. You wonder that you never saw them in such a strong and self-evident light before. You are first surprised at the transcendent yet simple and benign insight—the intuition of the preacher; soon this merely personal sentiment is gone, and you are absorbed exclusively in the deepening interest of the subject; you assume an attitude of solicitous attention; you hold your breath till he reaches his periods; if he pauses to think or renew his strength, at the chief divisions of his discourse, you observe a general movement in the assembly, a momentary relaxation of the mental tension. But again the spell prevails: you wonder that he does not pour forth his evident power overwhelmingly; you wonder that yourself and all men have felt the truth so little heretofore; you resolve to go forth from your seat a better man; you weep, and if you look about you, you perceive the tear trembling in the eye of the gray-headed hearer near you; the little child is wrapped in interest; the thoughtless man of the world rouses himself from his listless posture, and is awe-struck. At last the emaciated speaker declines, exhausted, into his seat; and, as

you go from the temple, you feel that it has been no ordinary day in your history; you feel that an effort ought to be made to have that sermon repeated. You long to speak to some one about the remarkable thoughts you have heard; but if you attempt to do so to one who has not heard the sermon he will probably discover nothing but what he knew before—*knew*, but never *felt*, as you now feel. The other marked trait of his preaching was the fact that his whole consciousness seemed to be absorbed, if we may so express it, into his subject. Preachers oftener, we think, than any other class of public speakers, deliver their discourses with accuracy, and even with labored emphasis, when it is manifest that their own attention is away from the subject, busied either with some absent attraction, or in an attempt to gauge the interest of the audience. We know not how, but most assuredly this fact, by some subtle process, is perceived by the hearer; and the dullest hearer is more or less conscious of it. Such a discourse cannot have effect; it may instruct, for it may have been well prepared; but its power is gone—it lacks directness and edge. The prime secret of eloquence consists, we think, in this ability to identify one's soul with his subject; it gives the right tone and emphasis, even to a speaker unacquainted with the art of elocution; it often produces the happiest gesticulation, even in men of naturally ungraceful

action. If this self-committal is secured, thought, utterance, and manner come spontaneously, and generally come spontaneously right. Channing was invariably, it would appear, an example of this excellence; he seemed to gaze intently at, into, through, his subject. It possessed his whole attention; and this manifest fact affected his hearers as by a mesmeric influence; they became absorbed in it with him. It is said that, when his discourse on the immortality of the soul was first preached, "the whole audience were heard to take breath" at the close of certain passages; and when, years later, the same sermon was preached in New York, a similar effect was produced.

His range of topics was exceedingly varied. He considered the pulpit the appropriate place for the discussion of all moral subjects that affect the social or political interests of man, as well as those that relate more directly to his spiritual hopes. The Gospel, he believed, had to do with every great interest of the race; and few important public events or questions escaped his notice in the pulpit. Was the nation agitated by a presidential canvass? he preached on the evils of party spirit. Was there danger of war? he preached on its moral and social horrors; yet asserted the duty of the citizen to his country. Had a mob interrupted public order? he discussed the importance of subordination to law and the means of popular virtue.

Education, Pauperism, Temperance, Slavery, and all similar questions, were his frequent themes, while the importance of personal morals and piety was never forgotten.

It would be an inadmissible omission to pass over without remark his character as a philanthropist. We refer, not merely to those habitual services of benevolence which are inseparable from the pastoral office—in these he was unusually faithful, as we shall see; but if he had not been a Christian pastor, nor known in literature, he would still have had a public reputation as a philanthropist. The moral discrimination, to which we have alluded as his chief distinction in theology, had also much to do with his philanthropy. To use his own words, he "*saw*, he *felt*, the great evils of our present social state;" and from his youth to the last years of his life he was struggling to solve the great problems of man's social renovation, and exerting himself, meanwhile, in most of the practical schemes of philanthropy that were within his reach. As early as his fifteenth year, the reading of the writings of Ferguson and Hutcheson, while at college, produced a profound impression upon his mind. "In his Junior year he had already become a moral and social reformer."

A restless anxiety to do good, to lay hold on and tear up the very roots of great social evils, took possession of his soul at this time; and subse-

quently, during "those days and nights of loneliness and frequent gloom" spent at Richmond, visions of vast change—of "a perfect society"—cheered his melancholy reveries. He had actually conceived the main ideas of modern Communism, and, "it is probable, thought of joining himself, as minister, to a settlement of Scotch emigrants whose fundamental principle was common property." The prudence of later life corrected his sanguine confidence in such impracticable schemes, as it corrected the fanciful republican projects of Southey and Coleridge. Yet it does not appear that he ever totally abandoned the hope of some similar revolution of social life.

His more extensive intercourse with men, as a Christian pastor, gave a more practical direction to his philanthropic sympathies. His journals contain long lists of plans "for public works, benevolent operations, special reforms." These plans include: Associations among Mechanics; a Work (to be written) on Ardent Spirits; Fire Clubs; Poor Houses; Female Employment Societies; Provisions of Wood on a Large Scale; Bake-houses for the Poor; Associations for the Relief of the Sick, the Old, and Debtors; Societies for the Advice of Emigrants, for the Reformation of Prostitutes, the Improvement of Africans, etc. His liberality was not absorbed in merely devising plans of good; but his personal charities were great. An

elder brother suggested that he "should have a guardian; he spends every dollar as soon as he gets it." "With a good salary he was yet always poor." One of his sisters writes: "He must have had $1,000 to lay out, per annum, of which he scarcely spent any thing on himself, except in case of sickness, or when he had to take a journey." She estimates that he gave away nearly $800 a year. He lived with almost ascetic severity, and dressed so poorly that the dignity of his manners alone saved him from an appearance of meanness.

He was one of the first co-laborers of the venerable Noah Worcester in the Peace movement; he sympathized and counseled with him also respecting the abolition of capital punishment. He did more than any other man toward the establishment of the Boston "ministry at large," the noble field of the noble Tuckerman. He took an active interest in the improvement of Prison Discipline. He exerted his best eloquence in the cause of temperance. He helped to originate the Massachusetts Bible Society; delivered its first anniversary address; and for eight years was chairman of its Executive Committee. He was deeply interested in foreign missions, and at one time was disposed to sunder all his local ties and throw himself into the foreign field; but his health interfered. He was the first to second the efforts of the eloquent Father Taylor in the Bethel Cause. Popular edu-

cation he esteemed the glory and security of the State. When Horace Mann turned from his brilliant political prospects to take charge of the common schools of Massachusetts, amid the smiles and scoffs of demagogues, Channing wrote him a congratulatory letter, and began immediately to co-operate with him in public and private. His memoirs and writings abound with invaluable opinions on these great themes—opinions maturer than can be found, perhaps, in any other writer. His discourses on self-culture and the education of the laboring classes have done great good, especially in England; they are considered the best exponents of his principles and aims.

The latest and maturest strength of Channing was devoted to the discussion of American slavery. No writer has treated the subject with more candor or more impressive eloquence. The amenity, transparent purity of style, argumentative conclusiveness, and lofty moral tone of his writings on this subject, gave to them a force which the impartial reader felt to be irresistible; he closes the book almost believing that if it were scattered broadcast over the land it must work a national revolution on the subject, and seal forever the doom of slavery. Channing had seen slavery among his own kindred at Newport; he had lived in its midst at Richmond; he had seen it in the West Indies, while seeking health there. The usual recapitulation about

whips, hard toil, poor food, etc., so elaborately made by ordinary lecturers, were not the views of this evil which most impressed him. He saw that slavery prevented pauperism; that its mere physical condition, like that of our domestic cattle, was really better than the physical condition of the lowest class of European laborers; but a man who should have alleged this fact as an apology for slavery—as a reason why the humanity of millions, made in the image of God, should be extinguished, or degraded—would have shrunk abashed under his indignant rebuke. It was the deep and terrible intellectual and moral ruin, which slavery entails, that covered the enormity with darkness and horror to his mind. It is no marvel that such a man should have called out, in solemn arraignment, before the reflecting world, an institution like this. Those who knew American slavery know that its evils can scarcely be exaggerated. It was replete with physical, moral, social, political, and all other evil. It held three millions of human beings in a state of chattelship. It sold them, like cattle, at the auctioneer's stand, and drove them to and fro in the land by a stupendous trade. It attempted to extinguish their intellects by laws prohibiting them to learn to read. It violated their tenderest relations, separating, at its caprice and forever, husbands and wives, parents and children. It violated the protections of woman's virtue, and spread

licentiousness over its whole territory.* It converted States, proverbial for "chivalry," into mere breeding estates to supply the market. It blighted the soil of the former garden-spots of the land. It corrupted the youth of the South by indolent and imperious habits; leading them to false sentiments of honor, the habitual carrying of deadly weapons, and a contempt for the dignity of labor. It blasted the spirit of enterprise, so that, while one section of the union was outstripping all precedents of history in industrial prosperity, the other was sinking with premature decrepitude. It prevented common school education—the stamina of States—by the extent of plantations, and the wide separation of the people. It was ever and anon involving the free labor of the North in losses and bankruptcy, by the failure of its supporters to meet their obligations. It created an odious predominance of power, based on property in human bones and sinews. It

* The report of the Synod of Georgia, December, 1833, says: "Such is the universality and greatness of the vice of lewdness, that, to those who are acquainted with slave countries, not a word need be said. On a subject like this we suffer not ourselves to speak. All the consequences of the vice are to be seen." In the circular of the Kentucky Union for the moral and religious improvement of the colored race"—a society formed by some of the most distinguished gentlemen, both of the clergy and laity, at Lexington, Ky.—addressed to the ministers of the Gospel in the State, they say: "To the female character, among the black population, we cannot allude but with feelings of the bitterest shame. A similar condition of moral pollution is to be found only *without the pale of Christendom.*"

violated the Constitution by refusing a hearing to the petitions of northern citizens in their own legislative halls at Washington. It defied the laws and powers of the general Government by a surveillance over the post-office, opening letters, and dictating to the agents of the Government what should and what should not be carried by them. It usurped nearly all the offices of our navy, army, and diplomacy. It seized men, recognized among us as our fellow-citizens, and peacefully occupied on board our ships in its harbors, and imprisoned them in its dungeons, against the express provision of the Constitution, and the decisions of its own courts in former cases; men, clogged with fetters, were sweeping the streets of its cities under mob menaces; men sent as messengers to appeal peacefully to the laws in behalf of such citizens—men honorable by long public standing, and clothed with official authority for their mission. It corrupted the Church to its infamous principles, and severed some of the strongest religious bodies of the land. Strong only in iniquity and braggardism, it nevertheless made the once strong spirit of the North bow, for years, with mean obsequiousness before it, and our Senators and Representatives cower at its arrogant threats, till a few brave spirits, branded as fanatics, and some of them at last made such by their terrible trials, arose, and recalled us to our primitive honor. It destroyed our national

self-respect, made us blush for our pretensions to liberty, rendered us a "hissing and a by-word" among the nations, and at last shattered the Republic by civil war, and spread desolation and mourning through its homes. We deliberately say there was no iniquity parallel to it among the civilized or semi-civilized communities of the earth.

The fine integrity and discernment of Channing's mind could not be perverted by that national familiarity with this appalling evil which produced among us one of the strangest solecisms in the history of civilization: a people the most enlightened in religion and law on the earth—whose sentiment of liberty had become a national passion—yet, under the maturest forms of liberal institutions, and the full blaze of the Christian revelation, dooming millions to a condition which was never dreamed of by oppressors during the midnight of the feudal ages! Channing saw it as he would have seen it in a foreign land. If it were to be ascertained that the government of China held from love of tyranny, or from interest, one of its great provinces, with a population of three millions, in precisely the condition of our slaves—violating their domestic relations, disposing of them as chattels, depriving them of the gains of their toil, prohibiting all intellectual development, and converting them and their children, by inexorable processes, into a hopeless exception to all the laws of development

and progress which God has ordained for the destinies of the human race—the discovery of such an anomaly would astound the world. Almost any effort from any quarter to break it up would be considered right; the sentiments of mankind would compel their governments to interfere with it in their negotiations; theologians would point to it as a proof of the necessity of divine revelation; Christians would attempt to invade it with missionaries and Bibles; the friends of liberty would furnish it with arms, as they furnished Greece and Poland, for a revolution; to help men to escape from it would be considered a holy service, and the shout of insurrection coming from it would be responded to by the voice of the civilized world—for, alas! the world has not yet learned the better efficacy of better means. Channing felt that he was not to look to China for it—there was none such there; it was under the banner and amid the temples of his own land.

His letters to his friends from Richmond show that his opinions on slavery had been determined at that early date, (1798.) During his residence at St. Croix, West Indies, (1830–31,) he "began to draft the plan and write the first sheets of his work on slavery." When he returned, the storm of abolition agitation was sweeping over the land. He did not approve the measures of the abolitionists, though "with the central principles" of the

movement "his whole heart was in unison." He chose to await a more propitious opportunity for his appeal to his countrymen. Meanwhile, he looked with deep solicitude on the courageous laborers in the cause; when that noble-minded woman, Lydia Maria Child, published the "first book in the United States" on the subject he called upon her in person with brotherly encouragements. He denounced the anti-abolition mobs from his pulpit, declaring that "the civilized world will heap just reproach on a *free* nation in which mobs pour forth their fury on the opposers of *slavery*."

During his rural seclusion for health on Rhode Island, in 1835, he exhausted his strength writing his book on the subject. It appeared opportunely at the height of the public excitement on the question, when for a man in his position to take a stand with the persecuted agitators was an act of heroism which could not fail to have effect. "I never acted," he wrote to a friend, "under a stronger conviction of duty than in publishing this book. My spirit preyed on itself till I had spoken the truth." Blessed be God for such a man at such a time! His example gives hope of the world; good men feel as they behold him, that the servility of millions shall not make them despair while one such mind predominates in brave ascendency.

In 1836, when the press of James G. Birney was destroyed by a mob, he again appealed to the American public. In 1837 he wrote his celebrated letter to Mr. Clay on the Annexation of Texas, a publication that for the time averted the threatened wrong. In 1837 Lovejoy fell a martyr while defending his press at Alton, Illinois. Channing, with other citizens, demanded Faneuil Hall, Boston, for a public meeting in defense of the violated liberty of the press. It was refused by the city authorities, from fear of the mob; he wrote an appeal to the citizens through the newspapers, so indignantly eloquent that the authorities had to yield, and the ancient echoes of liberty were again awakened within those revered and consecrated walls. He continued his interest in this great movement till the last; his last public effort was made against slavery.

Authorship with Channing was quite fortuitous. He was singularly indifferent to literary fame, and perhaps no man ever felt less anxiety about the severities of criticism. He had, in fact, a high moral purpose in all he wrote; a purpose that rendered him superior to the usual motives of literary ambition. He never read the eulogistic review of his works in the Westminster Quarterly, though it was several times in his hands; and the severe, if not malicious, criticisms of Hazlitt and Lord Brougham in the Edinburgh were equally neglected. This was not

an affected indifference; no one knew the fact till he mentioned it to Dr. Dewey, as "a piece of secret history known to no other person, and which he wished not to be known." "I have felt," he said, "that the less I read about myself the better." The publication of his occasional sermons was owing to the solicitations of his hearers. His articles on Milton, Napoleon, and Fénelon, that first brought him prominently before the literary world, were written with no expectation of their extraordinary success, but for the purpose of giving a more varied and elevated tone to the "Christian Examiner," which he had been mainly instrumental in starting, as an organ of the new Unitarian movement. His subsequent publications were sermons, addresses, and lectures on practical questions, essays on slavery and on other philanthropic subjects. He projected an elaborate work on "Man," but had only prepared four or five chapters when death closed his labors.

Having done the best he could in these writings for the practical purpose before him, he not only disregarded all mere criticism upon them, but seldom recurred to them in his thoughts. He had, indeed, an almost morbid repugnance to review his own productions. "I have," he says, "something of the nature of the inferior animals in regard to my literary offspring. When once they have taken flight, I cast them off, and have no need of further

acquaintance." A charitable desire to aid a friend was the motive which induced him to publish his first volume of Miscellanies in 1830; a similar motive led to the publication of a second volume; and at last the complete edition of his works in six volumes was prepared for the benevolent purpose of furthering the business of a brother. But, though not designedly an author, his literary reputation, especially in Europe, is scarcely paralleled by that of any other American writer of his day. He possessed the best elements of a successful writer — poetic temperament combined with the philosophic genius, and a style of remarkable transparency and power. His critique on Milton is a splendid estimate of the great Puritan bard, and has been placed by an English writer above that of Macaulay; his article on Napoleon is one of the most sternly just dissections of the moral man ever made; the terrible criminality of the despot is brought out in such contrast with his vast powers as to appall the reader. The false glare of martial and imperial splendor is extinguished; and the Great Captain stands forth before the world solely in his moral responsibility. The paper on Fénelon is an admirable one, and in it Channing unconsciously painted his own exalted character.

His style has rare excellencies, but has faults also. He repeats and expands too much, and an attenuation of his thoughts is often the result.

Still he seldom becomes tame; his sentences always retain their silvery brightness, even when drawn out to great tenuity. His style may be compared to a tissue of silver wire, woven most uniformly, but ever and anon incrusted with gold or studded with gems. The pure moral element of his character, of which we have repeatedly spoken, is, above all, the luminous characteristic of his writings. Large moral views, renovating thoughts, meet you at almost every page; they penetrate and palpitate in the soul of the reader. This was Channing's power, and this is the highest power; this, when accompanied, as it was in him, with poetic beauty and rare felicity of diction, forms the highest example of genius.

We have thus far contemplated Channing chiefly in his relations to public life — as theologian, preacher, philanthropist, and author. His more private or personal character was one of exceeding beauty. His childhood was blooming and buoyant, and marked by many generous traits. The following quotation speaks significantly for his boyhood: "Thanks to my stars, I can say I never killed a bird. I would not crush the meanest insect that crawls upon the ground. They have the same right to life that I have—they receive from the same Father, and I will not mar the works of God by wanton cruelty." While at college, the moral strength of his character was shown in his entire

preservation from the immoralities then prevalent around him. His fellow-collegian, Judge White, says: "His wisdom, goodness, and sanctity, as well as his genius and intellectual powers, were strongly developed; and I began to feel in his company, what only increased upon me afterward, a mingled affection and respect, approaching to awe, which the presence of no other man ever inspired in the same degree." This feeling of awe was not uncommon among his friends, notwithstanding his child-like simplicity and Christian meekness. Dewey compares it to the reverence entertained for Washington, which kept his most intimate camp associates from laying the hand upon his shoulder, or using with him any similar familiarity. It was, in Channing's case, the effect of a certain moral dignity, nay, sanctity, that attracted while it awed; you felt, notwithstanding his kindly ease, that you were in the presence of a rare man, whose mental and moral superiority humbled you with a humility most salutary and cordial.

There was little or no humor in his otherwise genial temperament; but he appreciated it in others, especially if it were not sarcastic. No man in Boston better appreciated Edward T. Taylor—that remarkable character who was so long one of the celebrities of the city; whom Emerson pronounced the greatest natural poet yet produced by the New World; who was as much an orator as a poet;

who could hardly speak, in public or private, without dropping from his lips precious pearls—singularly beautiful tropes, brilliant epigrams, happy phrases—often as rich in wisdom as in beauty. Taylor had exquisite politeness, manners which would have graced a court; yet he was the most pungent of colloquial satirists; but he seldom or never ventured a sarcasm in the presence of Channing. He was not restrained by fear, for, like John Knox, "he never feared the face of man;" but his sensitive heart loved Channing with a woman's idolatry, and he caught his sweet spirit whenever he approached him. There were two men that Taylor felt sure of meeting in heaven, should he get there himself; they were his old Methodist Bishop Hedding, and his venerated "heretic" friend Channing—the "angelic heretic," as he called him. Taylor was, perhaps, the greatest humorist of his day in New England, and we doubt whether Channing enjoyed more the conversation of any other man.

When settled as pastor, in Boston, Channing was still unmarried; he moved into the parsonage, and, by the pretext of needing his mother's care, contrived to bring her and most of her family under his protection. During her long life his relations to her formed one of the most beautiful pictures of filial affection on record. He married his cousin, a lady of wealth, in his thirty-fourth year, and thence-

forward enjoyed life with constantly increasing delight. His mother-in-law's country residence on Rhode Island became his home during most of each summer—a home supplied with every thing that could contribute to the gratification of cultivated taste, and surrounded by some of the finest scenery and the blandest summer atmosphere of New England. It was here that he composed his most important works, meditating them under the tranquilizing influence of woodland walks and serene landscapes. It was his delight to gather around him, in the rural homestead, happy groups of children; he loved their confiding innocence and joy, and they never felt in his presence the awe with which his elevation inspired older persons: "A little child during one of these visits threw herself into the arms of an elder friend, and, smiling through her tears, exclaimed, 'O, this is heaven!' so affected was she by the atmosphere of love which he diffused. And a young girl wrote, 'He welcomed me with a kindness that took away all fear—a kindness that I felt I might trust forever; for it was like that which must belong to spirits in eternity. His daily life is illuminated by a holiness that makes his actions as impulsive and as peaceful as a child's; it is a happiness to be in his presence.'"

He entertained a most delicate and exalted appreciation of woman; her influence he considered

the chief conservative element of modern civilization. Ladies distinguished in literature were among his correspondents; and his letters to Lydia Maria Child, Felicia Hemans, Joanna Baillie, Harriet Martineau, etc., are among the best indications of his character. He believed that society should secure more fully the rights of the sex, and he practically carried out the opinion that married women should have absolute control of the property they possessed before marriage.

With his fine sensibility was contrasted a dauntless moral courage. We can hardly conceive that it were possible for him to be intimidated in the performance of any known duty. He appeared in the antislavery contest when he was at the height of his reputation; when the intelligence and fashion of Boston united in paying him homage; and when his fellow-citizens, especially among the higher classes, were prepared to see in this step only an astounding absurdity, a public self-degradation. Many old friends stood aloof from him after that best appeal which he could make to their respect. But he murmured not; he held on his course, growing more serene and strong in spirit as his years advanced, till at last the reaction of public opinion on the subject of slavery began to turn all generous hearts admiringly toward him. Good men, under their new and indignant convictions of this heinous national wrong, would weep in the public assembly

at an allusion to his sublime self-sacrifice. The ingenuous youth of Boston, including many of her old historic names—her Phillipses, Quinceys, Sumners, Adamses, Bowditches, Sewels, etc.—caught the inspiration of his courage, and followed in his footsteps; for he had molded their moral characters by his preaching and writings.

The time of Channing's public life in Boston was one of the most remarkable periods in its history. The social, political, and intellectual fermentation that prevailed there, especially during the second quarter of the century, reminds us of Athens under Pericles. The greatest men of the New England Athens were then extant, and in their fullest energy. The people, well trained in the common schools, enthusiastically crowded Faneuil Hall, the Odeon, Tremont Temple, to hear John Quincy Adams, Judge Story, Webster, Everett, Winthrop, and Choate. The pulpit was powerful; the elder Beecher, a very Hercules in polemics, thundered his orthodoxy in one quarter; Channing announced new opinions and attracted, by high discourse, throngs of *élite* minds, young and old, in another; young Parker startled all the city and its vicinity by his daring speculations. Meanwhile Father Taylor was, perhaps, the most popular of its pulpit orators; his chapel was thronged, not only by his sailors, but by people of culture who could not resist the fascination of his natural eloquence,

but wept under his pathos, and wondered at his wit and wisdom. The humble pulpit of the old mariner was a very throne of power, and his corrugated face, weather-beaten on the seas, glowed with a marvelous beauty and majesty as he swayed the subdued multitudes at his will. Noted foreigners, sojourning in the city, must all go to hear him; and some of them, like Harriet Martineau, Dickens, etc., must describe him in their books, as its intellectual phenomenon. Not far off, young Emerson propounds his theological difficulties, abdicates his pulpit, and takes to the lecture desk to initiate a philosophy which sets the whole community astir with wonder and debate; Alcott and Margaret Fuller join him, and the Dial with its Orphic Sayings appears. The famous Roxbury experiment in Socialism is made, and fails. The Lowell Institute begins its lecture courses; the Lyceum, or Lecture System, is started, and soon extends over all the Northern States. Lowell Mason, with his friend, Webb, introduces a new epoch in musical taste, especially in sacred music, which extends over New England, and at last over the nation; the Handel and Haydn Society springs into enthusiastic life, and familiarizes the people with the best masters of the art. Allston returns from Europe, crowned with artistic fame, to charm, by his urbanity and fine culture, the social circles of Cambridge and the metropolis, and

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to kindle the artistic ambition of their youth. The elder Dana still remains, a social and a literary power; the younger Dana makes his famous voyage before the mast and prepares for his literary and antislavery career. Meanwhile a host of young authors, reformers, and statesmen begin to appear on the scene. Young Hawthorne writes his tentative but brilliant stories at Salem, and soon becomes a Bostonian; young Thoreau begins his strange dreams; young Lowell, young Whittier, young Holmes, young Longfellow—alas, that we can no longer call them young!—begin to sing. Prescott and Motley are preparing for their successful careers as historians. Garrison publishes his "Liberator;" Sumner, Phillips, Charles Francis Adams, Dana, Quincy, Wilson, Banks, Horace Mann —most of them still in the freshness of youth—plunge into the antislavery, the "irrepressible conflict," which soon revolutionizes the politics of the State, and at last regenerates the nation, though it be by the baptism of fire and of blood.

Most of these young men began their remarkable careers in Channing's day; a few of them soon after his death; all of them were formed by the influences of that period. A wonderful time was it for the New England metropolis; Boston has never seen a greater day. Channing moved, amid its stirring events, a calm but potent actor in the best of them. He was not to see the completion of the

new era; he saw its glory dawning all around him. He was to be taken away from it to a higher reward; yet one more effort must be made for liberty. On the first of August, 1842, he delivered at Lenox his last public address; it was in commemoration of West Indian emancipation; he was too feeble to utter the whole of it, but threw his last strength into its splendid peroration. Mrs. Sedgwick, who heard him, says that "his countenance was full of spiritual beauty; and when he uttered that beautiful invocation toward the close of his address—which would not have been more characteristic or fitting had he known that he should never again speak in public—he looked like one inspired." The effort exhausted him; it was his final and fitting service to his country and his age; and thus descended this great light: "On Sunday, October 2, as he heard the bells ring, he said to us, 'Now go to church.' 'It is a part of our religion, dear sir, to nurse the sick and aid our friends.' 'True,' he replied, 'you may stay.' He asked us to read to him from the New Testament. 'From what part?' 'From the Sermon on the Mount.' As we closed the Lord's Prayer, he looked up, with a most expressive smile, and said, 'That will do now; I find that I am too much fatigued to hear more. I take comfort, *O, the greatest comfort*, from these words. They are full of the divine spirit of our religion.' In the afternoon he spoke very

earnestly, but in a hollow whisper. I bent forward; but the only words I could distinctly hear were, 'I have received many messages from the Spirit.' As the day declined his countenance fell, and he grew fainter and fainter. With our aid he turned himself toward the window, which looked, over valleys and wooded summits, to the east. We drew back the curtains, and the light fell upon his face. The sun had just set; the clouds and sky were bright with gold and crimson. He breathed more and more gently, and, without a struggle or a sigh, the body fell asleep. We knew not when the spirit passed. Amid the glory of autumn, at an hour hallowed by his devout associations, on the day consecrated to the memory of the risen Christ, and looking eastward, as if in the setting sun's reflected light he saw promises of a brighter morning, he was taken home."

His remains were brought to Boston, and committed to the grave amid the mourning of all classes and parties. As the procession moved from the church, the bell of the Catholic cathedral tolled his knell—a fact never perhaps paralleled before in the history of Romanism.

And so departed one of the great men of the Republic—one who, amid its servility to mammon and to slavery, ceased not to recall it to the sense of honor and duty—a man whose memory his countrymen will not willingly let die. As the

visitor wanders among the shaded aisles of the western part of Mount Auburn, he sees a massive monument of marble designed by Allston, the poet-painter. Generous and brave men, from whatever clime, resort to it, and go from it more generous and brave, for there reposes the great and the good man whom we have commemorated. The early beams, intercepted by neighboring heights, fall not upon the spot; but the light of high noon, and the later and benigner rays of the day, play through the foliage in dazzling gleams upon the marble—a fitting emblem of his fame: for when the later and better light which is yet to bless our desolate race shall come, it will fall with bright illustration on the character of this rare man, and on the exalted aims of his life.

VIII.

WESLEY—APOSTLESHIP.

ROBERT SOUTHEY wrote our most entertaining, if not our most satisfactory, life of John Wesley. We are inclined to pronounce it the best of all his prose works, notwithstanding the classic rank usually awarded to his life of Nelson. Coleridge read it many times with ever-increasing interest, and annotated it, affirming that when, through illness or *ennui*, he could read nothing else, its romantic pages never failed to delight him. Southey's theory of the Great Methodistic Movement was fallacious, as he subsequently acknowledged; Wesley's followers have never liked his book; but no scholar among them, who is familiar with their history and literature, can fail to be astonished at the almost absolute thoroughness of his research, and the equal accuracy of his data. In a private letter to Wilberforce, Southey wrote: "I consider Wesley as the most influential mind of the last century — the man who will have produced the greatest effects centuries, or perhaps millenniums, hence, if the present race of men should continue so long"— and that was the century in which lived Frederick the Great, Washington, Napoleon,

Newton, Goethe, Voltaire, and not a few other historical men.

On February 23, 1791, Wesley preached his last sermon; and it has been remarked that "on that day fell from his dying grasp a trumpet of the truth which had sounded the everlasting Gospel oftener and more effectually than that of any other man for sixteen hundred years." The Reformers of Germany, Switzerland, France, and England wrought their great work more by the pen than by the voice. It has been admitted that Whitefield preached more eloquently, with few exceptions to larger assemblies, and traveled more extensively (though not more miles) than Wesley, within the same limits of time; but Wesley survived him more than twenty years, and his power has been more productive and more permanent. Whitefield preached eighteen thousand sermons—more than ten a week for his thirty-four years of ministerial life. Wesley preached forty-two thousand four hundred after his return from Georgia—more than fifteen a week. His public life, ending on February 23, 1791, stands out in the history of the world unquestionably pre-eminent in religious labors above that of any other man since the apostolic age.

In reading the history of such a man we linger over the record with eager questions—What is the explanation of this anomalous life? How did he achieve his incomparable labors? What were the

distinctive attributes of his character? Whence was his power?

Contemplated in almost any one of its phases, the life of Wesley appears unusual, if not great; but considered as a whole, its symmetrical completeness is almost a peculiarity in the history of distinguished men; for how seldom do we find, in the biographies of such men, that any great life-plan has been conclusively achieved—achieved in such manner as to complete their own anticipations, and not to leave to the precarious agency of their successors the task of fulfilling their designs, or of repairing their failures? Wesley not only saw the initiation of the Methodistic movement, but conducted it through the successive and critical gradations of its development, and lived to see it at last an organic, a settled and permanent system, in the Old World and in the New, with a thoroughly organized ministry, a well-defined and well-defended theology, the richest psalmody then known to English Protestantism, a considerable literature, not of the highest order, but therefore the better adapted to his numerous people, and a scheme of ecclesiastical discipline which time has proved to be the most effective known beyond the limits of the papal Church. By his episcopal organization of his American societies, and the legal settlement of his English Conference, he saw his great plan in a sense completed; it could be committed to the

contingencies of the future, to work out its appointed functions; and, after those two great events, he was permitted to live long enough to control any incidental disturbances that might attend their first operations, and to pass through a healthful, serene conclusion of his long life—a life which the philosopher must pronounce singularly successful and fortunate, the Christian singularly providential. He not only outlived all the various uncertainties of his great work; he outlived the prolonged and fierce hostilities which had assailed it; the suspicions and slanders which had been rife against himself personally; and died at last universally venerated, without pain, without disease, in his bed at his own home, at the head-quarters of his successful cause, and with the prayers and benedictions of the second and third generations of his people.

And this life, so fortunate in its rare completeness, was still more remarkable for its manifold aspects. Wesley seemed to be conducting at once the usual lives of three or four men, if indeed the word usual can be applied to any one department of his life. In either his literary labors or his travels, his functions as an ecclesiastical legislator and administrator, or his labors as an evangelist or preacher, he has seldom been surpassed; and a historian of Methodism hardly makes a questionable assertion, when he affirms that a man of more extraordinary character probably never lived upon this

earth; that his travels, his studies, or his ministerial labors were each more than sufficient for any ordinary man; that few men could have endured to travel so much as he did, without either reading, writing, or preaching; that few could have endured to preach as often as he did, supposing they had neither traveled nor written books; and that very few men could have written and published so many books as he did, though they had always avoided both preaching and traveling.

He possessed in an eminent degree one trait of a master mind—the power of comprehending and managing at once the outlines and the details of plans. It is this power that forms the philosophical genius in science; it is essential to the successful commander and the great statesman. It is illustrated in the whole economical system of Methodism—a system which, while it fixes itself to the smallest locality with the utmost tenacity, is sufficiently general in its provisions to reach the ends of the world, and still maintain its unity of spirit and discipline.

No man knew better than Wesley the importance of small things. His whole financial system was based on weekly penny collections; and it was a rule of himself and his preachers never to omit a single preaching appointment, except from invincible necessity. He was the first to apply extensively the plan of tract distribution. He wrote, printed,

and scattered over the kingdom, pamphlets and placards on almost every topic of morals and religion. In addition to the usual services of the Church, he introduced the band-meeting, the class-meeting, the prayer-meeting, the love-feast, the watch-night, the quarterly meeting, and the annual conference. Not content with his itinerant laborers, he called into use the less available powers of his people by establishing the departments of local preachers, exhorters, and leaders. It was, in fine, by gathering together fragments, by combining minutiæ, that he formed that powerful system of spiritual means which is transcending all others in the evangelization of the world.

Equally minute was he in his personal habits. Moore, his biographer and companion at City Road, says that the utmost neatness and simplicity were manifest in every circumstance of his life; that in his chamber and study, during his winter months of residence in London, not a book was misplaced, or even a scrap of paper left unheeded; that he could enjoy every convenience of life and yet acted in the smallest thing like a man who was not to continue an hour in one place; that he appeared at home in every place, settled, satisfied, and happy; and yet was ready any hour to take a journey of a thousand miles.

It was not only in the theoretical construction of plans that Wesley excelled, if indeed he paused at

all to theorize about plans; but he was pre-eminently distinguished by the practical energy with which he prosecuted the great variety of his labors. Their history would be absolutely incredible with less authentic evidence than that which attests it. He was perpetually traveling and preaching, studying and writing, translating and abridging, superintending his societies, and applying his great conceptions. He traveled usually four thousand five hundred miles a year, and this itineracy, at the rate of more than the circumference of the globe every six years, was pursued on horseback down to nearly his seventieth year—preaching two, three, and sometimes four sermons a day, commencing at five o'clock in the morning; and in all this incessant traveling and preaching he carried with him the studious and meditative habits of the philosopher. Scarcely a department of literature or scientific inquiry escaped his attention.

Like Luther, he knew the importance of the press; he kept it teeming with his publications, and his itinerant preachers were good agents for their circulation. His works, including abridgments and translations, amounted to about two hundred volumes. They comprise treatises on almost every subject of divinity, on poetry, music, history; natural, moral, metaphysical, and political philosophy. He wrote, as he preached, *ad populum;* and he was not only the original leader,

but the author, of those plans which have become a feature of our times for the popular diffusion of knowledge.

Unlike most men who are given to various exertions and many plans, he was accurate and profound. He was an adept in classical literature and the use of the classical tongues; his writings are adorned with their finest passages. He was familiar with a number of modern languages; his own style is one of the best examples of strength and perspicuity among English writers. He seems to have been ready on almost every subject of learning and general literature; as a logician, he was remarkably acute and decisive, famous in his college at Oxford for technical logic.

He was but little addicted to those vicissitudes of temper which characterize imaginative minds. His temperament was warm, but not fiery. His intellect never appears inflamed, but always glowing —a serene radiance. His immense labors were accomplished, not by the impulses of restless enthusiasm, but by the cool calculation of his plans, and the steady self-possession with which he pursued them. He habitually exemplified his favorite maxim: "Always in haste, but never in a hurry." "I have not time," he said, "to be in a hurry." He was as economical of his time as a miser could be of his gold; rising at four o'clock in the morning, and allotting to every hour its

appropriate work. "Leisure and I," he wrote, "have taken leave of each other." Fletcher of Madeley said of him: "Though oppressed with the weight of near seventy years, and the care of near thirty thousand souls, he shames still, by his unabated zeal and immense labors, all the young ministers of England, perhaps of Christendom. He has generally blown the gospel trump, and rode twenty miles, before most of the professors who despise his labors have left their downy pillows. As he begins the day, the week, the year, so he concludes them, still intent upon extensive services for the glory of the Redeemer and the good of souls." Such, however, was the happy distribution of his time, that, amid a multiplicity of engagements that would distract an ordinary man, he declares there were few persons who spent so many hours in studious solitude as himself. And it has justly been remarked, that one wonder of his character was the self-control by which he preserved himself calm, while he kept all in excitement around him.

Like most remarkable men who have reached old age, Wesley was careful in his physical habits. Though of feeble constitution, his regularity, sustained through such great exertions and vicissitudes, produced a vigor and equanimity which are seldom the accompaniments of a laborious mind or of a distracted life. And often did he declare that he had not felt lowness of spirits one quarter of an

hour since he was born; that ten thousand cares were no more weight to his mind than ten thousand hairs to his head; and that he never lost a night's sleep in his life before his seventieth year.

One of the noblest spectacles in human life is the sight of an old man sustaining his career of action or of endurance, to the last, with an unwavering spirit. Such was Wesley. He sought no repose till death. Activity was the normal condition of happiness to him, as it must be to all healthful minds. After the eightieth year of his age he visited Holland twice. At the end of his eighty-second he wrote, "I am never tired with writing, preaching, or traveling." The scene of his preaching under trees which he had planted himself at Kingswood, and when most of his old disciples there were dead, their children's children surrounded him, has perhaps no parallel in history. He outlived most of his first preachers, and stood up, mighty in intellect and labors, amid the second and third generations of his people; and it is affecting to trace him through his latter years, when persecution had subsided, and he was everywhere received as a patriarch, sometimes exciting, by his arrival in towns and cities, an interest such as the king himself would produce. He attracted the largest assemblies which have been congregated for religious instruction in modern ages, being esti-

mated sometimes at more than thirty thousand. Great physically, intellectually, and morally, when at length he died, in the eighty-eighth year of his age and sixty-fourth of his ministry, he was beyond question one of the most extraordinary men of history.

He lived to see Methodism spread through Great Britain, America, and the West India Islands. Hundreds of traveling, thousands of local preachers, and tens of thousands of followers, were connected with him at his death. And how have they multiplied since! In our day they report about five million of communicants, twenty million of adherents. The epitaph of Sir Christopher Wren, in St. Paul's Cathedral, the work of his own genius, is applicable to Wesley's memory in almost all the Protestant world: "Do you ask for his monument? Look around you."

Such was the life of Wesley in its outlines; a minute examination of his traits can only confirm these more striking characteristics.

As a preacher he remains a problem to us. It is well nigh impossible to explain, at this remote day, the secret of his great power in the pulpit, apart from the divine influence that is pledged to all faithful ministers. Whitefield may be considered the chief model, if not the founder, of that popular and powerful hortatory preaching that, since his day, has been characteristic of Methodism, and

which has still in our day thundered along its great American circuits, and shaken the vast multitudes of its assemblies in the wilderness and in its camp-meetings. Charles Wesley, Fletcher, and many others of the early Methodist preachers, were good examples of it—men of emotion, of passion, of tears, and of native eloquence. Wesley, perspicuous, logical, peculiarly self-possessed and calm, was nevertheless more powerful than any of them in the influence of his discourses on both the sensibilities and the understandings of his hearers. The marvelous physical effects which attended the first Methodist preaching began earlier, and were more frequent, under his discourses than under Whitefield's. They continued, more or less, till the end of his career. There must have been some peculiar power in his address which the records of the times have failed to describe; something more than what we can infer from the descriptions of those who heard him, and who tell us that his attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive; his voice not loud, but clear, agreeable, and masculine; his style correct and perspicuous.

The obviously great character of the man, and the prestige of his singular career, doubtless gave authority to his word, so that his hearers felt as did Beattie, who heard him at Aberdeen, and who remarked, after one of his ordinary discourses, that

"it was not a masterly sermon, yet none but a master could have preached it;" but before he had any such prestige, his calm power in the pulpit was as extraordinary as at any later period. The stoutest hearts quailed before him; the most hardened men sank to the earth overwhelmed; infuriated mobs retreated, or oftener yielded, acknowledging the magic of his word; and their leaders, shouting in his defense above the din of the tumult, conducted him safely and in triumph to his lodgings. There was a trait of military coolness and command in his manner at times, which reminds us of his namesake,* the greatest captain of his country. It is doubtful whether, like Whitefield or Charles Wesley, he wept much in preaching; he exhorted and entreated, but he mostly spoke as "one having anthority" from God. Hence the effectiveness of his rebukes, as often recorded in his Journals. "Be silent or be gone," he cried once to a party of papists in Ireland, who interrupted his services, "and their noise ceased." "A few gentry" disturbed one of his assemblies; he "rebuked them openly, and they stood corrected." "I rebuked him sharply," he writes of a certain character, "and he was ashamed." In a brilliant congregation, among whom were honorable and right honorable persons," he says, "I felt they were given into my

* Wellington was of the same ancestry, and their names were originally the same.

hands, for God was in the midst of us." At times, however, there was mixed with this authoritative power an overwhelming pathos. In the midst of a mob "I called," he writes, "for a chair; the winds were hushed, and all was calm; my heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears, my mouth with arguments. They were amazed, they were ashamed, they were melted down, they devoured every word." That must have been genuine eloquence.

His Journals continually afford examples of his power over his opponents. On entering one of his congregations he meets a man who refuses to return his bow, or to kneel during the prayer, or to stand during the singing; but under the sermon his countenance changes; soon he turns his face abashed to the wall; he stands at the second hymn, kneels at the second prayer, and as Wesley goes out catches him by the hand, and takes leave of him "with a hearty blessing." As he approaches an out-door assembly, in another place, "a huge man" runs fully against him; he repeats the insult with oaths, and, pressing furiously through the crowd, plants himself close by the preacher. Before the close of the sermon his countenance changes; soon he takes off his hat, and when Wesley concludes, seizes his hand, "presses it earnestly, and goes away quiet as a lamb." He was once accosted in Moorfields by a drunkard who could hardly stand. Wesley conversed with him and gave him

his tract called, "A Word to a Drunkard." "Sir, sir," he stammered, "I am wrong; I know I am wrong." He held Wesley by the hand for a full half hour. "I believe," says the latter, "he got drunk no more." In his prayers, as well as his exhortations, was this singular power manifest. "As we were concluding," he writes at Newcastle, "an eminent backslider came into my mind, and I broke out abruptly, "Lord, is Saul also among the prophets? Is James Watson here? If he be, show thy power!' Down dropped James Watson like a stone, and began crying aloud."

The calm ministerial authority which so much characterized him was not assumed; it was the spontaneous effect of a true and a natural courage. Military men instinctively recognized it whenever they came into his presence; and soldiers were among his most respectful hearers and enthusiastic admirers. Had he been a military leader he would have been the cool, intrepid man in the field that he was in the mob. It was not only his maxim always "to face the mob," but he invariably kept his ground till he conquered it. He was sometimes pelted, pushed, dragged by clamorous thousands from village to village, in the night, while the rain descended in a storm, and yet as self-possessed "as if he were in his study;" and his calm voice, ringing in prayer above the noise, silenced with awe the excited multitude, and con-

verted their leaders into defenders who safely delivered him. Such a man on a field of battle would have courageously done whatever was to be done, whether it were to lead a forlorn hope, to head a charge, or, more difficult still, to conduct a perilous retreat. It is doubtful whether John Wesley ever felt, or could readily feel, the emotion of terror. Such a susceptibility would seem to have been incompatible with his temperament. Not only in mobs, when his life was at stake, but in sudden and perilous accidents, he never lost his self-possession. As he was hastening through a narrow street a cart swiftly turned into it; he checked his horse, but was "shot over its head as an arrow from a bow," and lay with his arms and legs stretched in a line close to the wall. The wheel grazed along his side, soiling his clothes. "I found no flutter of spirit," he says, "but the same composure as if I had been sitting in my study." Trifles, so called, often reveal the characters of great men better than their most conspicuous deeds. The bending forest shows the course of the storm, but straws show it as well and more readily.

A fine humor pervaded the nature of Wesley, and often gave striking readiness and pertinency to his words. Thomas Walsh, one of his most learned and most saintly preachers, was morbidly scrupulous, and complained in a letter to him, that among the "three or four persons that tempted" him to

levity, "you, sir, are one, by your witty proverbs." Wesley's humor, however, enhanced the blandness of his piety, and enabled him sometimes to convey reproof in a manner that could hardly be resented with ill temper. "Michael Fenwick," he says, "was often hindered from settling in business, because God had other work for him to do. He is just made to travel with me, being an excellent groom, *valet de chambre*, nurse, and, upon occasion, a tolerable preacher." This good man one day was vain enough to complain to him that, though constantly traveling with him, his own name was never inserted in Wesley's published Journals. In the next number of the Journals he found his egotism effectually rebuked. "I left Epworth," wrote Wesley, "with great satisfaction, and, about one, preached at Clayworth. I think none were unmoved but Michael Fenwick, who fell fast asleep under an adjoining hay-rick."

He could be noble in his reproofs as in all things else. Joseph Bradford was for many years his traveling companion, and considered no assistance to him too servile, but was subject to changes of temper. Wesley directed him to carry a package of letters to the post; Bradford wished to hear his sermon first. Wesley was urgent and insisted; Bradford refused. "Then," said Wesley, "you and I must part." "Very good, sir," replied Bradford. They slept over it. On rising the next morning

Wesley accosted his old friend and asked if he had considered what he had said, that "they must part?" "Yes, sir," replied Bradford. "And must we part?" inquired Wesley. "Please yourself, sir," was the reply. "Will you ask my pardon?" rejoined Wesley. "No, sir." "You wont?" "No, sir." "Then I will ask yours!" replied the great man. Bradford melted under the example, and wept like a child.

The aptness of Wesley's replies sometimes took the form of severe repartee, but only when it was deserved. "Sir," said a blustering, low-lived man, who attempted to push against him and throw him down; "sir, I never make way for a fool." "I always do," replied Wesley, stepping aside and calmly passing on.

In befitting circumstances, however, no man could show more Christian meekness in the treatment of offenses. At Dewsbury a person, full of rage, pressed through the throng, and struck him violently on the face with the palm of his hand. Wesley, with tears in his eyes, recollecting the precept of Christ, turned to him the other cheek. His assailant was awed by his example and slunk back into the crowd; he became a friend to the Methodists, and afterward imperiled his life to save one of their chapels from being destroyed by fire.

No fact could better refute the imputation of fanaticism to Wesley than the catholic spirit which

he so much enjoined and exemplified; for fanaticism is never charitable. His Journals show that he early broke away from his High-Church exclusiveness; that he looked back upon it with regretful wonder, and that the progress of his self-development in all charitable sentiments was steady and benignant. In 1765 he wrote to his Calvinistic friend Venn: "I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ. We have not only one faith, one hope, one Lord, but are directly engaged in one warfare. We are carrying the war into the devil's own quarters, who, therefore, summons all his hosts of war. Come, then, ye that love God, to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty! I am now well-nigh *miles emeritus senex, sexagenarius;* [an old soldier who has served out his time and is entitled to his discharge—a sexagenarian;] yet I trust to fight a little longer. Come and strengthen the hands, till you supply the place, of your weak but affectionate brother."

He rejoiced with justifiable pride in the liberal terms of communion in his societies. "One circumstance more," he says, "is quite peculiar to the people called Methodists; that is, the terms upon which any persons may be admitted into their society. They do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatever. Let them hold particular or general redemption, absolute or

conditional decrees. . . . They think, and let others think. One condition, and one only, is required—a real desire to save their souls. Where this is, it is enough: they desire no more: they lay stress upon nothing else: they ask only, 'Is thy heart herein as my heart? if it be, give me thine hand.' Is there," he adds, "any other society in Great Britain or Ireland that is so remote from bigotry? that is so truly of a catholic spirit? so ready to admit all serious persons without distinction? Where is there such another society in Europe? in the habitable world? I know none. Let any man show it me that can. Till then let no one talk of the bigotry of the Methodists."

This he wrote no less than three years before his death. In these latter years of his life he was continually inculcating such sentiments among his people; he often took occasion in his public assemblies to expound formally this liberality of his cause. When in his eighty-fifth year, preaching in Glasgow, he says: "I subjoined a short account of Methodism, particularly insisting on the circumstance—there is no other religious society under heaven which requires nothing of men, in order to their admission into it, but a desire to save their souls. Look all around you, you cannot be admitted into the Church or society of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opinions with them, and adhere

to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion. . . . Now, I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is now allowed, or has been allowed, since the age of the apostles. Here is our glorying, and a glorying peculiar to us. What society shares it with us?"

When eighty-six years old he still repeats the noble boast. "I returned to Redruth," he says, and applied to the great congregation, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.' I then met the society, and explained at large the rise and nature of Methodism; and still aver I have never read or heard of, either in ancient or modern history, any other Church which builds on so broad a foundation as the Methodists do; which requires of its members no conformity either in opinions or modes of worship, but barely this one thing; to fear God and work righteousness."

His only restriction on opinions in his societies, was that they should not be obtruded for discussion or wrangling in their devotional meetings; not the creed of a man, but his moral conduct respecting it, was a question of discipline with primitive Methodism. The possible results of such liberality were once discussed in the Conference. Wesley conclusively determined the debate by remarking: "I have no more right to object to a

man for holding a different opinion from me, than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig and I wear my own hair; but if he takes his wig off, and begins to shake the powder about my eyes, I shall consider it my duty to get quit of him as soon as possible."

"Is a man," he writes, "a believer in Jesus Christ, and is his life suitable to his profession? are not only the main, but the sole inquiries I make in order to his admission into our society." He abhorred controversy, and seldom engaged in it when it was not necessary in self-defense. "How gladly," he wrote to a friend, alluding to four simultaneous publications against him, "how gladly would I leave all these to themselves and let them say just what they please! as my day is far spent, and my taste for controversy is utterly lost and gone;" and at another time he laments that he "had to spend near ten minutes in controversy" in one of his public assemblies; more than "he had done in public for many months, perhaps years, before."

Wesley was not only in advance of his own age in this as in many other respects; he was in advance of ours. Many of his own people would now fear the consequences of such unusual liberality; he committed himself to it in ways that might subject any one of his preachers, in this day, to serious suspicion, if not to greater inconvenience. He abridged and published in his Arminian Magazine, as an ex-

ample for his people, the Life of Thomas Firmin, a Unitarian, and declared in his preface, that though he had "long settled in his mind that the entertaining of wrong notions concerning the Trinity was inconsistent with real piety," yet, "as he could not argue against matter-of-fact," "he dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous." He never hesitated to recognize the moral worth of any man, however branded in history, and however he differed from himself in opinion. He "doubted whether that arch-heretic, Montanus, was not one of the holiest men of the second century." "Yea," he adds, "I would not affirm that the arch-heretic of the fifth century, (Pelagius,) as plentifully as he has been bespattered for many ages, was not one of the holiest men of that age." He admired the piety of the best writers of the Latin Church, and made some of their works household books for Methodist families. At a time when the name of Arminius was a synonym of heresy, he not only openly acknowledged his evangelical orthodoxy, but boldly placed the branded name of the great misrepresented theologian on the periodical which he published as the organ of Methodism. It was his extraordinary liberality that made him a problem, if not a heretic, in the estimation of many of his pious contemporaries. His sermon on the "Catholic Spirit" would excite a sensation of surprise, if not of alarm, in

many a modern orthodox congregation. Yet what modern theologian has held more tenaciously, or defined more accurately, the doctrines of spiritual Christianity?

Such a mind could be neither weak nor wicked; and it may be doubted whether the deeds or the sentiments of John Wesley show most the genuine supremacy of the man. His double excellence proves his double superiority over his age.

It has sometimes been asked whether he is entitled to rank in the highest class of illustrious men? The question is vague, and hardly admits of an unqualified answer. Of the two highest classes of great men—the speculative, or philosophical thinkers, on the one hand; and the practical, comprising great legislators, captains, and inventors, on the other—it may be doubted which is entitled to the supremacy. The former, if we do not include in it the poetic, the artistic genius, has afforded comparatively little advantage to mankind, beyond an exhibition of the greatness of the human faculties. Speculative inquiry has seldom given to the world an important, demonstrated truth. It is doubtful that it has yet afforded a single unquestionable result in the highest field of its research —that exalted sphere of abstract truth which is usually called speculative philosophy; and its investigations of the constitution of the human mind

are yet far from settling, with scientific certainty, any theory of psychology.

On the other hand, a single remarkable practical life, sometimes a single act of such a life, has advanced appreciably the whole civilized world. A mighty captain has broken the chains of a nation. A sagacious legislator has set free the energies of millions of men for progress in all useful enterprises. A single philanthropist has initiated improvements in the administration of justice that have alleviated the anguish of tens of thousands, have reformed the prison discipline and penal jurisprudence of his country, and promise yet to turn prisons into schools, and to render the gallows a barbarity, abhorrent as well to the justice, as to the mercy of mankind. A diffident, poor, and drudging artisan, by the invention of the steam-engine, has given to his own country an aggregate of steam-power equal to the labor of more than four hundred millions of men; more than equal to twice the number of males capable of labor on our planet—an invention which has already, in its combined power throughout the globe, a capacity for work equal to the male capacity for manual toil of five or six planets like ours. Such a man may be said to create new worlds on the surface of our own.

Even the most illustrious mind which has influenced modern scientific inquiry, while teaching the world how to think, never discovered a new scien-

tific fact. Bacon gave not a single original invention to the practical arts; though his mighty intellect, expounding and systematizing a thought that was scientifically as old as Aristotle, and practically as old as human reason, has directed all subsequent practical studies.

The classification of extraordinary men must inevitably be difficult and ambiguous; but the genius which most influences the sentiments, if not the intellect of men, the genius of illustrious painters, sculptors, architects, and poets, may perhaps be more relevantly included in the class of great practical, than in that of great speculative minds. The speculations of Plato, Descartes, Leibnitz, and Kant, considered apart from the beneficial example of superior intellectual power that they present, have added little or nothing to the advancement of the race; and the few examples of practical utility that can be cited from the history of philosophic thinkers might be claimed as exceptional to their usual classification. Even the mathematicians rank doubtfully, at least, between the two classes: the discoveries of Newton appertain to the physical world; and the greatest of his successors has legitimately placed the proudest monument of astronomical knowledge in the class of scientific mechanics. But amid the ambiguities besetting this question—a question more curious, perhaps, than important—there can be no hesitancy

in placing John Wesley in the first rank of those historical men whose prominence in the legislature, the cabinet, the field, philanthropy, or in any sphere of active life, is attributable to their practical sagacity, energy, and success. In these three respects what man in history transcends him? If it can be affirmed that he was far from being an original, a profound thinker; that, as some of his critics have pronounced, his mind was more "logical," or "intuitional," * than philosophic, yet who can deny him the tribute of the historian of his country, that he conducted "a most remarkable moral revolution; was a man whose eloquence and logical acuteness might have rendered him eminent in literature; whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu, and who, whatever his errors may have been, devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he sincerely considered the highest good of his species. Such was Macaulay's opinion; Buckle pronounces him "the first of theological statesmen." The somewhat vague affirmation that his mind was more intuitional than philosophical, if it has any meaning at all, must signify that his sagacity was so rapid and accurate that the processes of reasoning and judgment, usual in other men, were not absent, but scarcely perceptible in his clear and prompt intellect. The results, or the practical facts with which

* The first is Coleridge's, the second, Isaac Taylor's opinion.

Wesley had to deal, like all the practical affairs of men, must always be contingent, and there can be no intuition of contingent results. Their right anticipation must be the effect of calculations and combinations of the intellect.

If Wesley was deficient in what constitutes the highest speculative or philosophic mind, this deficiency itself may have been a necessary qualification for the more utilitarian greatness to which he was appointed. It was necessary that he should be a great legislator in order to render secure his achievements in so many other respects. Speculative philosophers have seldom been good legislators; the history of great men affords not one example of the two characters combined. The Republic of Plato is still an ideal system of beautiful impossibilities to statesmen: the Politics of Aristotle have seldom had a legislative copyist; the Utopia of Sir Thomas More is still a Utopia, the source of proverbial expression to our language, but of no laws to our commonwealths; the new Atlantis of Bacon is yet a dream, notwithstanding its utilitarian suggestions; Locke's Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina were found impracticable; and Rousseau's *Contrat Social* ranks only as an example of political rhetoric. But John Wesley founded an ecclesiastical system that has only become more efficient by the lapse of a hundred years, and that is acknowledged to be more effective,

whether for good or evil, than any other in the Protestant world. More than has been usual with the founders of systems of policy, whether in Church or State, it was his own work. His most invidious though most entertaining biographer, Robert Southey, has acknowledged his ability as a legislator, and conceded that "whatever power was displayed in the formation of the economy of Methodism was his own." He began his great work not only without prestige, but in entirely adverse circumstances. The moral condition of the nation which required his extraordinary plans, was the most formidable difficulty to their prosecution. He threw himself out upon the general demoralization without reputation, without influential friends, without money, with no other resource than the power within him and the God above him. Before he had fairly begun his extraordinary career, he was reduced even below the ordinary advantages of common English clergymen; he had become already the object of derision; he had no church, and was turned out of the pulpits of his brethren. Excepting some insignificant societies, like that of Fetter Lane, the highway or the field, and the reckless mob, were all that remained to him. But he began his work: he united his rude converts into "Bands," formed "Classes," built Chapels, appointed Trustees, Stewards, Leaders, Exhorters; organized a Lay Ministry, and rallied into it men of extraordi-

nary characters and talents; founded the Conference; gave his societies a discipline and a constitution, a literature, a psalmody and a liturgy; saw his cause established in the United States with an episcopal organization, planted in the British North American Provinces, and in the West Indies, and died at last with his system apparently completed, universally effective and prosperous, sustained by five hundred and fifty itinerant, thousands of local preachers, more than a hundred and forty thousand members, and so energetic that many men who had been his co-laborers lived to see it the predominant body of Dissenters in the United Kingdom and the British Colonies, the most numerous Church of the United States of America, and successfully planted on most of the outlines of the missionary world.

The success of such a career depends, of course, much upon "circumstances;" but circumstances may develop great men, they cannot create them. He is great who can turn favorable circumstances to great account; he is greater who can create his own favorable circumstances, as well as turn them to account. Wesley did both. The success which depends on external conditions is often impaired or defeated by the lack of the comprehensive vigilance and skill that can control the whole series of circumstances essential to success; often the critical one in the series may be obscure; the key to the whole

may, therefore, be lost in an unguarded emergency, and many a career brilliantly begun has thus come to an impotent conclusion. It was next to impossible for Wesley to have failed in this manner. Not only his clear discernment saw, but his unintermitted and steady energy seized and appropriated, all facilities, small and great. If it should be said that he had superfluous labors, it certainly cannot be said that he had deficient diligence; and if he sometimes availed himself of unnecessary circumstances, it was hardly possible that he could lose a necessary one.

Few men have shown more than Wesley that self-possession or repose characteristic of the most elevated minds, and which art has instinctively impressed upon the classic works of antiquity. It was, doubtless, one of the causes as well as one of the indications of his power. He could hardly be disconcerted, or thrown from the right attitude of his strength. He moved, year after year, through varied and intolerable opposition—attacks from the press, the pulpit, and the mob; but he always appears the same calm, powerful man. It was not his temperament alone, but his faith, as much or more, which thus sustained him. He believed that he was right, and, therefore, trusted consequences to God; and wrongs from which the noblest natures would most revolt could not arrest or dismay him. During the Calvinistic

controversy some of his opponents had the confidence of his intractable wife, who had not only deserted him, but had carried with her his papers and correspondence, and refused to return them. The correspondence is known to have been interpolated in such a way as to appear to justify her monomaniacal jealousy. It was about to be published in the "Morning Post" by his antagonists; but one of their own party, out of regard to the honor of religion, hastened to Charles Wesley, and entreated him to communicate the fact to his brother, that, if possible, the scandal might be averted. The letters were to be published on the morrow, but Wesley had an engagement to preach that day at Canterbury, and had promised to take with him the daughter of his brother, to gratify her with a view of the ancient cathedral. Charles, alarmed at the prospect, hastened to Foundry Chapel. "Never," writes his daughter, "shall I forget the manner in which my father accosted my mother on his return home. 'My brother,' said he, 'is indeed an extraordinary man. I placed before him the importance of the character of a minister; the evil consequences which might result from his indifference to it; the cause of religion; stumbling-blocks cast in the way of the weak; and urged him by every relative and public motive to answer for himself, and stop the publication. His reply was, 'Brother, when I devoted to

God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation? No. Tell Sally I will take her to Canterbury to-morrow.' I ought to add, that the letters in question were satisfactorily proved to be mutilated, and no scandal resulted from his trust in God."

A fact like this, with a man like Wesley, speaks to all hearts; but its noblest significance can be known only to the noblest minds.

But was he faultless? If he had been, he would have been less admirable to us, for the truest human greatness is in the combat with evil; he would have been less suited for his great work, for to men, rather than to angels, has the Gospel been committed.

Besides the minute imperfections which belong to most men, Wesley has been charged with ambition and credulity.

The writer who has dwelt most upon the latter weakness has, nevertheless, however inconsistently, deemed it a sort of fitness for Wesley's peculiar mission, and, with a noticeable credulity himself, has supposed that even the mysterious noises at the Epworth rectory were preternatural, or at least extramundane; that they were a means of laying open his faculty of belief, and of creating a right of way for the supernatural through his mind. When it is remembered that Wesley's age was one of general skepticism among thinkers, we cannot

be surprised if he revolted, in his great work, to the opposite extreme; and the error was certainly on the better side. Credulity might have injured his work, but skepticism would have rendered it impossible.

If his followers cannot deny the charge; if they must admit that in a certain form this defect is pervasive in his Journals and fragmentary writings, yet should they make the admission with well-guarded qualifications. They should remind themselves that he seldom gives a direct opinion of the supposed preternatural facts which he so often records; that they are presented with circumstantial particularity as the data for an opinion on the part of others; that, singularly enough, and a noteworthy proof of his good sense, they seldom or never appear in his standard theological writings, hardly tinge the works which he left for the practical guidance of his people, but are almost invariably given as matters of curiosity and inquiry in his miscellaneous and fugitive writings; and that no one doctrine or usage of Methodism was permitted by him to bear the slightest impression of them to posterity.

The severity with which this weakness of Wesley has been treated by his critics is an exception to the usual treatment of historical characters; for what distinguished man has not had some marked eccentricity of opinion or of conduct? And what was this

defect of Wesley but an eccentricity of opinion? If it was characteristic of his opinions, it was not characteristic of the man: for what man was more rigorously practical in piety, or more liberal about opinions? what man ever combined the noble, self-possessed enthusiasm essential to the heroic character, with so little of the passion or uncharitableness that is an essential of fanaticism? His critics would impair his authority as a thinker by contemning his credulity; but they deem it no wonder, or at least no detraction, if indeed not an amiable illustration of the heart, apart from the intellect, of his friend, the most influential writer as well as the most prominent moralist of his age, who shared so largely this very weakness of Wesley. Men who sneer at Wesley are but amused when, in reading the pages of Boswell, they find Johnson dissenting from a ghost story of Wesley's, only because the latter did not, in his opinion, investigate the case sufficiently, affirming that "this is a question which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding." Plato, as Johnson called Wesley, might well linger when all the rest of the audience had slunk away, if Johnson still stood in the lecturer's desk. The Cock Lane ghost story has never impaired Johnson's rank as an author; but had Wesley shown the superstitious weakness of the

literary giant in many well-known and ludicrous instances, he could scarcely have been treated with more scorn than he has incurred by his record of supposed preternatural facts, of a class, too, which have not yet ceased to be believed by the most of mankind. He recorded these facts, it should be borne in mind, in an age in which Christian Scotland executed at the stake a supposed witch, and in the next century after that in which the good Sir Matthew Hale had condemned to the gibbet two women for witchcraft; when the great Bacon had avowed his belief in astrology, and sat in a Parliament in which an enactment was passed against witchcraft—a statute not repealed till Wesley himself was thirty-three years old.

The treatment that Wesley has received on account of this one weakness, so different from the usual charity of writers toward great men, is perhaps a real though undesigned compliment. It would seem to arise from the fact that little else can be found for sarcasm in his pure life and noble character, and that this therefore must be made as available as possible.

It has not, however, sufficed to save him from the imputation of ambition. This charge affords, in fine, the chief explanation of his extraordinary life to his best known biographer. According to that writer, "no conqueror or poet was ever more ambitious," and "the love of power was the ruling

passion of his mind." It is due to Southey, however, to say that he acknowledged the error of this charge. An admirable defense of Wesley by a Churchman, who personally knew him during many years, convinced his biographer of his error. "I had formed a wrong estimate of Wesley's character," he says, "in supposing him to have been actuated by ambition." A letter is also extant in which he again confesses that he "is convinced that he was mistaken in supposing ambition entered largely into Mr. Wesley's acting impulses," and promises "to make such alterations in the book as are required in consequence."

That Wesley loved power would be no very serious charge. Power, as a means of success and usefulness, may be as desirable as any other talent, as genius itself; the vice is not in the passion, but in its motive; to indulge it for selfish ends would be pernicious and criminal, as the pursuit of money or of any other means of success would be; but as a means for the accomplishment of good ends, it may be as virtuous as the diligent pursuit of resources by the philanthropist, or of intelligence by the student. Wesley's whole life was a demonstration that he sought not power for himself. What man ever more thoroughly sacrificed the usual selfish motives of ambition? What human life was ever more consecrated to the welfare of others? That he had a conscious pleasure in the useful exercise

of his great but unsought power need not be denied; it was the right of his power, as his power was the right of his talents and position. He would have been an exception to the usual and beneficent law of nature herself, in this respect, had he not known that exalted pleasure. Nature accompanies her endowments with instinctive dispositions for their use. The man who is constituted or capacitated for the exercise of power would not be in harmony with himself if he had not the instinctive enjoyment of his appointed task; and the highest moral law of his position requires, not that he should be unconscious of this enjoyment, but that he should consecrate it by benevolent motives, and regulate it by that "temperance in all things" which, if it is a self-denial to the vices, is still more an enhancement of the virtues.

Many of the foregoing remarks apply to Wesley's personal religious character, and on that subject scarcely an additional word is needed. "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and the whole narrative of his life is an illustration of his piety. One observation, however, is worthy of emphatic record: that while few, if any, modern public teachers have treated more of the principles of the spiritual life, or held up a higher standard of them—of Justification, Regeneration, Sanctification, and the evidences and tests which apply to them—few, if any, have been more exempt from the taint of Mysticism,

He threw to the winds the mystic doctrines while returning, on the ocean, from Georgia; and it is a noteworthy fact, that except the early and comparatively brief period of his spiritual awakening, and of his intercourse with the Moravian brethren, the minute record of his life, presented in his Journals, contains hardly an instance of that introspective and hypochondriacal anxiety which weakens most religious biographies. We meet in this wonderful autobiography with occasional and brief ejaculations of prayer and praise, but with no self-anatomization. It is vigorous with the cheerful moral health of his own mind throughout, however marred by the narration of disease in other minds.

Methodism spread so rapidly, and was so much in contrast with the religious teachings of the times, that it was natural enough it should come in contact with morbid consciences almost everywhere; some of the characters prominent in early Methodism were doubtless subjects of mental as well as of moral disease; but Methodism was not responsible for the fact. It found such sufferers scattered throughout its course; if in some instances they sought in it excitement which could only exasperate their malady, it nevertheless, in most instances, brought them the relief which they could not find in the heartless religious formalities of the age. And, above all, the practical character of

Wesley's own genius was so impressed upon his discipline, that religious melancholy was usually sooner or later dispelled by the energetic and beneficent practical habits to which his followers were trained. Without designing it, he established a religious system which, while it could not fail to attract diseased minds, was singularly adapted to cure them, in both its hopeful theology and its active discipline; and its history records not a few affecting cases of chronic mental disease, in which life was rendered not only tolerable, but useful and holy, and death itself joyful, by the moral support of the Gospel as taught in its doctrines and embodied in its regimen.

To our more common human sympathies the character of Wesley presents attractions rarely to be found in the records of the lives of great men. Such records usually ignore the more personal or intimate traits of public characters. It would seem, indeed, to be assumed in them that exhibitions of the common affections of our nature would derogate from their subjects, as reducing them too much to the common level of humanity; whereas it is precisely in these respects that the common mind most readily recognizes them, and the revelations of the heart in the life show the real man more infallibly than the manifestations of mental power. It is doubtless true, also, that public men, absorbed in plans of ambition, or even of usefulness, often

lose to some extent those sensibilities that make the whole race akin, and the loss of which can be compensated by no other virtues. Perhaps the truest proof of the highest style of character is presented in the co-existence of an unimpaired heart with the highest development of the mental forces, or the greatest energy of life.

To the mass of mankind, including the best of them, the character of Luther would lose much of its interest and worth, were his passion for music and for nature, his sympathy for his friends, his fondness for his children, and his love of the virtuous and beautiful Catharine von Bora, unrecorded. Not only to the common heart, but to the discernment of the highest minds, the pure and mighty reformer did a scarcely less noble deed in rescuing the nun of Nimptschen, and in restoring her to her appropriate sphere as a woman, by placing her in his home and heart, than he did by wresting from the grasp of the Pope the scepter of universal religious domination. Wesley's greatness as a public man is hardly more distinctly recorded than his amiability and tenderness as a private man. We have continually occasion, in reading his four volumes and letters, to admire his personal, apart from his public character. Where can we find, in the records of historical men, a more genial, unimpaired nature amid the labors and hostilities of a long public career? His friendships were strong, even to an

excess of sentiment. His love of nature retained the freshness of youth in the decay of age; it was not so much a sentiment of taste, as an instinct of his being, a loving fellowship with the universal nature. His temper, sometimes, yet only momentarily, ruffled, had not merely the serenity of health, but was radiant with religious joyfulness, and playful in extreme age with the blandest humor. While moving the realm by his activity and moral power, he was the welcome guest of humble households, the delight of dinner-tables, the familiar companion of children.

While hundreds of stalwart itinerants responded to his commands, as veterans to the orders of a leader on the field, and mobs recoiled before his calm but mighty word, while rude armies of ten, twenty, thirty thousands listened, wept or prayed, under his discourses, on the mountain sides or in the market-places, his sympathetic presence brought light and consolation to the hearths of desolate homes, to the despair of deathbeds, to the guilt and anguish of prisons, to the frenzy even of the madhouse. But did this man—so illustrious, and yet so simple that the simplicity of his anomalous life seems the most inexplicable fact of its distinction—in his stern, inflexible career, extending through most of a century, in his life apparently never knowing privacy, did he himself know the affections and tenderness which he so generally excited,

the sorrow which he so often touched and turned into joy—did his "heart know its own bitterness?" Was this never-resting life — these wanderings to and fro while more than two generations of men were passing away—the effect of a passion for public life that had extinguished the usual instincts of the heart for wife, children, and home, for the privacy in which the heart best lives, for quiet and rest, and the affections? How often, reading his Journals, do we see him, in scenes of rural repose, or of domestic virtue, longing for relief from the restless duties of his career; for a home, however humble, where, with books and meditative tranquillity, he might live more unto himself, or for the few that might be dearer to him than himself! But one sublime and mysterious word always broke the spell of these seductive wishes—Eternity! "I believe there is an eternity, and must arise and go hence!"

Poetry and music were natural endowments with him, as with most of his remarkable family. His correspondence with his unhappy wife, it is said, reveals the tenderest sensibility — a heart that proves him capable of having been the most affectionate of husbands. His numerous published letters to women correspondents are the most characteristic of his writings; they are fervid with pure and delicate sentiment. This man who worked so mightily could also love intensely. He never deemed

it necessary to record an apology for his affection for Grace Murray. All accounts of her show that she was worthy of him; that she possessed not only rare attractions of person and manners, but an elevated soul. She combined an indefinable charm of character with extraordinary talents; she formed and regulated many of his female classes in the north of England; she traveled with him in Ireland, and with womanly grace and modesty, as well as skillful ability, promoted among the women of Methodism the great work in which he was engaged. She reciprocated his affection for her, though with shrinking diffidence. His hopes were defeated by the management of his brother and Whitefield, who probably apprehended that domestic life would interfere with his public labors, and hastily secured her marriage to one of his preachers. He bitterly felt his loss; and the relief which he sought in unslackened devotion to his great work is proof of his genuine greatness rather than of his want of sensibility. He kept the painful recollection locked in his own heart, never obtruding it in any of his subsequent published letters, except in one instance, when he ministered relief to a Christian friend, in a similar sorrow, by referring to his own, the keenness of which he describes as extreme. He "saw his friend that was, and him to whom she was sacrificed," immediately after the sacrifice, but never again records an allusion to her

except in the single instance mentioned, and in a poetical account of her history and of his affection for her, that he kept sacredly during his life, but that was discovered and published by one of his biographers—a long, sad, heart-touching narrative, in which he dwells with minutest interest on every recollection of the case. It is as fine an example of his poetical power as of his capacity for loving. The preacher whom Grace Murray married left Wesley's Connection. He died in ten years after his marriage; the lady survived till 1803. She rejoined the Methodists, was many years a class-leader among them, and lived and died esteemed and beloved by them. Wesley pursued his career without once turning aside to re-open the wound in either heart by an interview. When eighty-five years old he allowed himself, however, the pleasure of a single conversation with her. She was in London, and expressed a wish to see him. Accompanied by Henry Moore, he called upon her. Though he "preserved more than his usual self-possession," the meeting, says Moore, was affecting. It did not continue long, and Moore never heard him mention her name afterward.

Such was the character of John Wesley; a character which no candid historian, after a thorough study of his life and works, can deny to him, however desirable it might seem to be able to attribute to him greater faults for the sake of an

apparently more impartial estimate. The candid student of history will be able to find in all its records but few men who had fewer faults, however many he may suppose he finds, who had more signal abilities or rarer virtues. For ourselves we confess we know not where to look for his peer, since the days of the chief of the apostles. Generation after generation arises to revere his name, to call him blessed, and to follow him as he followed his Lord. That good gray head looks down from the wall of many a humble parlor: in unnumbered hearts his memory is enshrined as the noblest of the later saints, the "father and brother" greatly beloved by the Church of the first-born on the earth and in the heavens.

THE END.

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